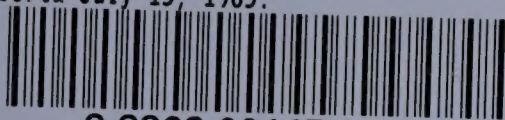


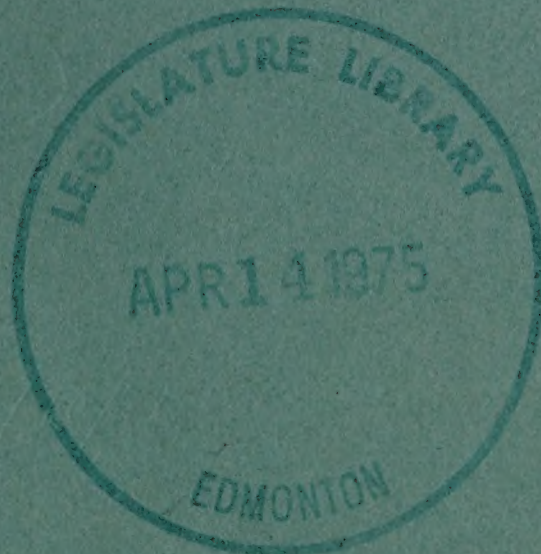
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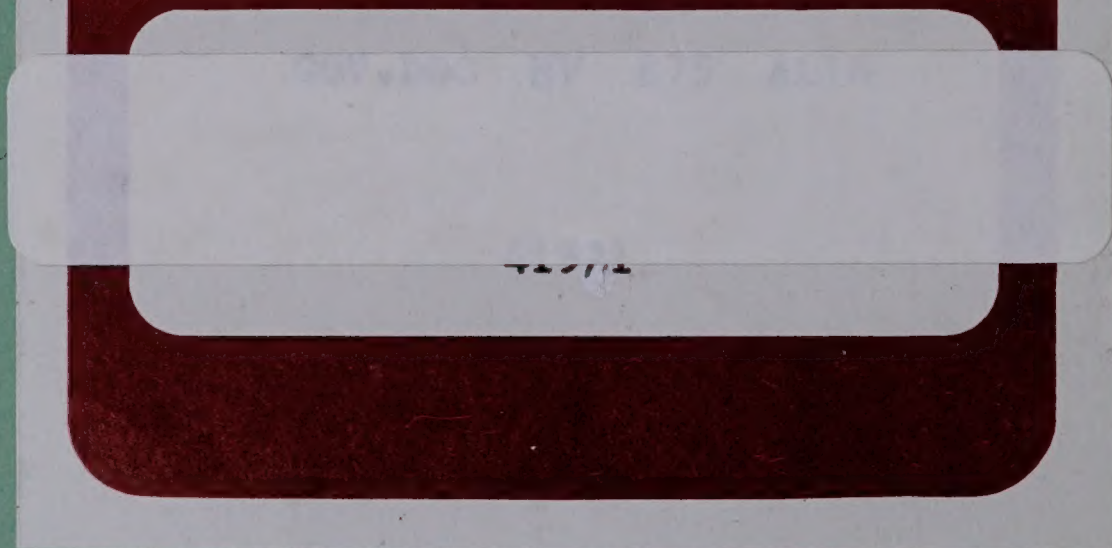
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**JULY 15, 1965**




## REPORT OF COMMITTEE

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IN THE MATTER OF  
THE CHILD WELFARE ACT  
and  
IN THE MATTER OF  
ORDER-IN-COUNCIL No. 1871-64

---

REPORT OF COMMITTEE

---

(Supplementary Report is being filed by Mrs. Bowker)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

His Honour Judge H. S. Patterson, Chairman

Mr. F. J. Fleming

Mrs. W. F. Bowker





## ERRATA

Page 41, 8th line should read "improvident" instead of "improvement".

Page 42 under Section D, Part 2, paragraph 2, in the first line the word "hurdilles" should read "hurdles".

### IN THE MATTER OF Order - in - Council No. 1871/64.

By Order-in-Council No. 1871/64 dated November 17, 1964, a copy of which Order-in-Council is attached as Appendix "A" to this report, the Executive Council, acting upon the recommendation of the Honourable Minister of Public Welfare, appointed the undersigned as a Committee pursuant to section 8 of The Child Welfare Act, being chapter 39, of The Revised Statutes of Alberta, 1955, reading as follows:

8. (1) The Minister may, with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, appoint from time to time such other committees as may be deemed desirable, for the purpose of making a thorough investigation into problems dealing with child welfare and of making recommendations for remedial changes.

(2) A committee appointed under this section shall consist of not more than three persons, one of whom shall be designated as chairman.

to cause an inquiry to be held to study child adoption services in the Province of Alberta and other matters related thereto.

The terms of reference for the Committee were set out in said Order-in-Council and it will be seen from the Order-in-Council that the terms of reference were very broad in order that the Committee would not be hampered at all in studying child adoption services and other matters related thereto.

It is significant to bear in mind that a committee so constituted differs from a commission of inquiry such as is normally set up to investigate allegations or charges. As there were no allegations or charges the purpose of the Committee was simply to investigate adoption and related problems.

Your Committee believed that the purposes of the Committee would be best served if submissions and hearings concerning child adoption services and related matters in the province could be as



informal as circumstances might require. It will be seen from the newspaper advertisement which is attached as Appendix "B" to this report that submissions were not required to be professionally prepared. It will be seen that submissions would be heard at Edmonton and in Calgary and such other places in the Province as they appeared to be warranted.

The arrangements for advertising inviting submissions were handled through the Provincial Government Publicity Bureau and the attached advertisement was published in daily newspapers and weekly newspapers throughout the Province.

A total of 56 written submissions were received by the Committee, 27 from organizations or public bodies and 29 from private citizens.

The organizations or public bodies making written submissions were the following, listed alphabetically:

- Alberta Association of Social Workers.
- Alberta Catholic Welfare Association.
- Alberta Conference United Church Women.
- Alberta Guidance Clinic, Calgary.
- Calgary Council of Community Services.
- Calgary Family Service Bureau.
- Calgary Presbytery United Church of Canada, Calgary.
- Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Edmonton.
- Catholic Family Service, Calgary.
- Catholic Women's League of Canada, Alberta Provincial Council.
- Children's Aid Dept. of the City of Calgary.
- City of Edmonton Welfare Department.
- Committee of Evangelism & Social Service, Alberta Conference, United Church of Canada.
- Council of Community Services of Edmonton & District.
- Diocesan Council for Social Service, Diocese of Edmonton, Anglican Church of Canada.
- Edmonton Jewish Community Council and Jewish Family Service.
- Family Service Association of Edmonton.
- Farm Women's Union of Alberta.
- Government of Alberta—Department of Public Welfare.
- Institute of Pastoral Care and Counselling of the Calgary Presbytery of the United Church of Canada.
- Presbytery of Calgary of the Presbyterian Church of Canada.
- Red Deer Community Welfare Group.
- Red Deer Local Council of Women.
- Royal Canadian Legion & Ladies' Auxiliary, Vegreville Branch No. 39.
- St. Thomas More Guild—Edmonton.
- Unitarian Church of Edmonton.
- Vegreville Home and School Association.

The briefs submitted by individuals were from all corners of the Province and some of the individuals submitting briefs appeared at the hearings.



Persons and organizations making written submissions were asked if they wished to attend the hearings of the Committee to amplify their submissions, and a total of 33 verbal submissions were made at three days of hearings in Edmonton, three days of hearings in Calgary, a one day hearing in Red Deer and a half-day hearing in Lethbridge. The public hearings were held in a most informal manner and were of great value to the Committee.

In addition to the organization and individual briefs submitted, there were 58 letters received by the Committee touching upon functions of the Committee, 7 of these letters being group letters signed by a total of 170 persons.

Questionnaires were sent out to 2,167 couples who had had adoptive placements of Government wards in their homes during the two preceding years and of these 42 were returned through the dead letter office indicating that a total of 2,125 were received by the addressees. An indication of the interest of the adoptive parents in the inquiry is that 1,547 questionnaires were returned with the answers completed.

Persons answering the questionnaires were informed that they could remain anonymous but approximately 90 percent of the people chose to affix their names to the questionnaires. It was indicated that the questionnaires would be confidential to the Committee and accordingly portions of this report dealing with an analysis of the questionnaires will not make specific reference to particulars that might identify the party concerned.

The form of questionnaire sent out is attached as Appendix "C" hereto and a statistical report founded on the completed questionnaires received is attached as Appendix "D". Both the questionnaire and the statistical report derived from it will be dealt with more thoroughly in the development of this report.

A great number of the adoptive couples answering the questionnaires added additional comments or attached letters in which they raised matters not specifically covered by the questionnaires. Where significant these comments will be referred to in the development of this report under their relevant headings.

Having regard to the broad terms of reference in the Order-in-Council, members of your Committee visited institutions and foster homes, Metis communities and Indian reserves. Mrs. W. F. Bowker visited such points as Paddle Prairie, Peace River, Lac La Biche,



Red Deer and Wetaskiwin. Judge Patterson and Mr. Fleming visited Lake Wabiska and Red Deer. Regional welfare offices visited by Committee members included Peace River, Lac La Biche, Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer and Lethbridge, and senior welfare officers from some other regional offices were interviewed.

In addition to interviews with regional offices, a questionnaire, a copy of which is attached as Appendix "E", was sent to all regional offices and replies were received from all regional offices. These questionnaires too are confidential to the Committee.

It has not been deemed necessary to do a statistical analysis of the regional office questionnaires but the replies to such questionnaires have been studied and considered in the preparation of this report.

Throughout the course of the study your Committee had the complete co-operation of the Superintendent of Child Welfare and of all other persons in the Department of Public Welfare in the principal cities and in all other places visited. Your Committee must also acknowledge the co-operation and assistance of Mr. J. M. Brothers, Secretary to the Committee, Mr. H. Finnegan, the Court Reporter who attended at the hearings, and the Court House staff in all four centres where hearings were held.

For convenience of reference throughout this report, generally The Child Welfare Act is referred to simply as the Act, the Department of Public Welfare as the Department, the Superintendent of Child Welfare as the Superintendent, the Child Welfare Commission as the Commission.

Although there is inevitably some overlapping when reporting under the various heads of reference in the Order-in-Council, it is perhaps most convenient to deal with the various heads or terms of reference in the order in which they appear in the Order-in-Council. It is felt that the first and second terms of reference:

- (1) to inquire into and report on the present adoption legislation, procedures and practices in the Province of Alberta.
- (2) to ascertain how effectively present legislation and procedures are meeting the needs of adoptable children in the Province of Alberta.

may be dealt with most effectively together and we have proceeded on this basis. Under these heads of reference it is also convenient to deal with legislation first, followed by procedures and practices.



## A. LEGISLATION

Representation was made concerning several provisions of The Child Welfare Act and it seems that other changes in legislation might be considered arising out of representations made to the Committee.

### I.—ROLE OF JUDGE IN ADOPTION

One of the matters that engaged the attention of your Committee in a special way was the role of the judge in adoption. The present Act gives the judge granting an adoption order a broad discretion under sections 74, 78 and 80. Section 74 provides that a judge may require additional material in support of a petition for adoption in excess of the supporting material thereby required. Under section 76 a judge may for cause dispense with the consent normally required of a child who has attained the age of 14 years, and may also for cause dispense with the consent of a guardian. Under section 78 a judge is given very wide powers to direct investigation with respect to the physical, mental or moral fitness of the child or the proposed adopter or adopters. Section 80 is the section dealing specifically with the making of an order of adoption and this section stipulates that a judge must be satisfied with the ability of the proposed adopter to fulfil the duties of a parent and with the propriety of the adoption having regard to the welfare and interest of the child, the religion in which the child had been “brought up”, and the interests of the proposed adopter and his religion.

It has been suggested that the three sections above mentioned give to the judge final determination of matters some of which might certainly be best determined by a well qualified social worker.

It may well be that with an increased number of professionally qualified social workers there could be a reduction in the role of the judge and a corresponding increase in the role of the social worker. It could be argued that the role of the judge should be limited to the purely legalistic aspect of the adoption procedure to ensure strict conformity with the law, to determine that all papers are properly completed, to inquire into the validity of any divorce of a proposed adopter, to inquire into the validity of the surrender of a child by the mother and to inquire into the declaration of permanent wardship upon a child coming into the care of the Department, etc. Proponents of a change in the role of the judge, including Mrs. Bowker, argue with considerable justification that the suitability of homes and



adoptive parents and similar matters are best determined by the social worker who makes direct examination into such matters. As opposed to this position Judge Patterson and Mr. Fleming believe that while the judge must rely to a great extent on the reports submitted to him by social workers, the quality of reporting to the Courts and the quality of investigation are more likely to remain at a high level if the entire work of the social worker and not only the papers and documents and the formalities of execution and service thereof are subject to judicial review.

### **Reservation of Mrs. Bowker.**

“With respect to the role of judges in adoption matters, it is my view that social factors should be assessed by the professional social work staff of the Child Welfare Branch and should not be subject to judicial review by the Court.

“The role of the Court should be confined to legal matters relating to adoption, namely, the legality of the marriage of the adopting parents; the legality of the surrender of the child; or the propriety of wardship proceedings by which he became a permanent ward. All other matters such as the suitability of the adoptive home, and selection of the particular child, should be left to Department workers who are qualified in this field by experience and training.

“In the early years of adoptions, judges were better qualified than the average government worker to assess the social factors involved in adoption. However, social work has now become a recognized profession and the jurisdiction of the Court should no longer include a review of the social factors already assessed by qualified workers. The selection of the home and of the child is based on an examination of the applicants extending over several weeks, with findings reviewed by professionally qualified adoption officers in the Central Office of the Department, and approved by the Child Welfare Commission.

“The matter first comes before a judge on the application for final order when the child has been in the home for a full year. It would hardly seem necessary at this stage for the judge to review the social factors that led to approval of the home in the first instance. His concern should simply be whether the child has adjusted satisfactorily to the adoptive home. Law and social work are recognized professional disciplines, and their roles in adoption should be separate yet complementary.”

## **II.—ROLE OF JUDGE IN PERMANENT WARDSHIP**

It is convenient at this time to consider the role of the judge in the related matter of permanent wardship. Until 1960 orders of permanent wardship were made by Juvenile Court judges. In 1960 The Child Welfare Act was amended and section 14a now provides that only a judge of the District Court may make an order of permanent wardship.



It was suggested by certain organizations that this procedure resulted in unnecessary delays, but it would seem that these delays when they occur are in most cases occasioned by the fact that the procedure in the District Court is more formal and that proof of personal service of documents is required for the protection of the parents or parent of the child.

It often occurs that parents who oppose the application of the Superintendent to have a child made a permanent ward come to Court in the first instance without legal counsel and, almost invariably, because of the gravity of the procedure, adjournments have been directed so that the parents can arrange to be properly represented. In this connection it would seem that some provision might well be made in the Act to provide for remuneration for counsel appointed by the Court if the parents cannot afford legal services. In criminal cases provision is made for just this procedure in many matters where the criminal charge is not comparable in gravity to the question of the future control and welfare of a child or to interference by the Court with sacred parental rights.

With respect to the question of which Court should exercise jurisdiction in permanent wardship, it is strongly felt that a legal training is required by the judge so that rules of evidence and other proper procedures will be applied. Accordingly, it would seem inadvisable to restore such jurisdiction to the Juvenile Court where many of the judges have no legal training, and, inasmuch as delays are occasioned largely because of the Court ensuring that parents have proper notice and proper legal representation it would appear that resultant delays must be accepted. These delays might often be reduced if there should be provision in the Act for appointment of counsel as above mentioned.

### **Reservation of Mrs. Bowker.**

“As stated above, jurisdiction to grant permanent wardships was removed from the Juvenile Court in 1960. The reason for this was that some magistrates and Juvenile Court judges at that time were too hastily granting wardship orders, frequently without proper notice to parents, and occasionally without them being present. In the past three or four years, however, there has been a marked improvement in the standards of Juvenile and Family Courts in the three major cities (Edmonton, Calgary and Red Deer) which have properly constituted Family Courts, each with a full-time judge. Because of the delay in getting hearings set down for hearing in District Court due to heavy dockets, it takes from two to three months (in Edmonton at least) to obtain an order for permanent wardship, and only then is the child legally free for adoption. Since Family Courts were set up for the specific purpose of dealing with family and child



matters, and since they have previously heard the application for temporary wardship, they are, in my opinion, competent to handle such cases with the minimum of delay and without loss in efficiency. Apart from the cities mentioned, however, applications for permanent wardship should continue to be heard in District Court."

### III.—INTER-FAITH PLACEMENTS

An examination of adoption legislation leads one to consideration of what many believe to be the most significant problem in adoptions in Alberta at this time, namely, the matter of inter-faith adoptions.

Because of the fact that this subject, including possible new legislation, might best be treated at length under the heading of Obstacles to Adoption, we will confine our observations under this part to comment about existing legislation.

An examination of the Act will show that while under section 66 there are certain restrictions on the placing of Catholic children in Protestant foster homes and institutions, Protestant children in Catholic foster homes and institutions, and children of other faiths in either Catholic or Protestant foster homes and institutions, these restrictions are limited to foster placements and are not made applicable to adoption placements. Section 66 states specifically that it relates to children dealt with "under this Part". The Part referred to is Part I of the Act relating to "NEGLECTED AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN". Adoptions come under Part II of the Act relating to "ADOPTION OF CHILDREN".

Contrary to popular opinion this distinction has been recognized in the Courts of this province and in a limited number of cases inter-faith adoptions have actually been made, although none have been contested on this ground and, accordingly, there are no reported authorities.

The operative section with respect to adoptions is section 80 which when read by itself makes the religion in which the child has been "brought up" and the religion of the proposed adopter only two of several factors to be considered by the judge making an order of adoption.

An analysis of the history of child welfare legislation in this province may be helpful inasmuch as it shows the derivation of legislation respecting neglected and dependent children and legislation respecting adoption.

The Children's Protection Act of Alberta, which was in force until repealed and re-enacted in The Child Welfare Act, chapter 4 of



the Statutes of Alberta, 1925, dealt with foster home placement, and provisions therein relating to foster homes were then incorporated in The Child Welfare Act. It is noteworthy that section 75 of The Children's Protection Act of Alberta corresponds closely to our section 66 of The Child Welfare Act relating to foster home placement.

Originally the matter of adoption was covered by The Infants Act, and provisions of this statute with respect to adoption were later incorporated in The Domestic Relations Act, chapter 5 of the Statutes of Alberta, 1927. Section 43 of said The Domestic Relations Act appears in almost identical form in the present section 80 of The Child Welfare Act. The adoption sections of The Domestic Relations Act were transferred to The Child Welfare Act in 1944. Thus it is only since 1944 that we have had both foster homes and adoptions covered by one Act.

In view of the fact that our current The Child Welfare Act is derived from separate acts relating to different aspects of child welfare one must be careful not to attempt to construe section 66 as overriding or even affecting section 80, as it is a cardinal rule of statute interpretation that where an act embodies several distinct acts one part throws no further light on any other part than if such parts were contained in separate enactments.

During the hearings the Ontario case of *In re Lamb* was more than once referred to as an authority for the granting of an order permitting an inter-faith adoption. This contested case decided in 1961, based on Ontario legislation, is not binding on Alberta Courts. It is significant, however, that the Ontario legislation with respect to foster placements and adoptions also derived from what originally were separate statutes, and, as in our Act, inter-faith foster placements are restricted without any similar restrictions being spelled out in the adoption provisions. Accordingly, the reasoning applied in the *Lamb* case would appear to be valid in the interpretation of Alberta Legislation.

#### IV.—PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Section 79 of the present Act came under review by your Committee. This is the section that provides that an order of adoption shall not be made unless the child has lived with the proposed adopter for at least one year immediately prior to the day of the petition or, in the alternative, the one year period of residence is dispensed with. We are, of course, principally concerned with government wards. Subsection (2) of section 79 relates to children who are not wards



of the government, or, as they are generally called, private placements, and in these cases the judge alone is involved. The judge, before making an order, is to be satisfied that the child has lived with the proposed adopter for one year or that it appears desirable in the best interests of the child or for other good and sufficient reason that the one year period of residence be dispensed with.

In the case of government wards, prior to the 1964 session of the Alberta Legislature, subsection (d) of section 79 provided that an order of adoption should not be made unless the Child Welfare Commission should testify in writing that the child had lived with the proposed adopter for one year or that for reasons set out in the certificate the period of residence might be dispensed with.

The circumstances in which the period of residence might be dispensed with and the effect of a 1964 amendment to section 79 (1) will be dealt with at greater length in another part of this report, but it is important at this juncture to consider the desirability of legislation prescribing a one year period of residence of the child with the adoptive parents prior to the making of an adoption order.

During the hearings there were representations made that the probationary period should be reduced. Others at the hearings endorsed the one year period in the current Act. Comparisons have been made with the required probationary period in other jurisdictions and it would be of some interest to sketch the requirements elsewhere, particularly in other jurisdictions in Canada.

British Columbia	- -	Period reduced from one year to six months effective January 1, 1965.
Saskatchewan	- - -	One year.
Manitoba	- - - -	One year for final adoption order (perhaps an interim order earlier).
Ontario	- - - - -	Six months.
Quebec	- - - - -	Two years, but at discretion of judge, can be reduced to six months where child is illegitimate.
New Brunswick	- -	New Act being prepared; possibly one year period.
Nova Scotia	- - -	One year.
Prince Edward Island		Six months.
Newfoundland	- -	Six months; new 1964 Act.
Yukon Territory	- -	One year; but six month period proposed.

The reasons advanced by the proponents of a shorter period include the following: reduced period of anxiety for adoptive parents, reduced period of anxiety for child (in older age groups), earlier completion of adoption and attendant reduction of case loads and acceleration of subsequent placements.



Advocates for retention of a minimum one year period, including the Child Welfare Commission, advance as their most cogent argument their actual experience that when an adoption breaks down it often occurs during the latter part of the probationary year. They also argue that where an adoption is completed in six months the parents are not then ready for the placement of another child and that there is danger that the shortened period will have the unexpected effect of reducing second and third adoptions. It is a well known fact that most people who adopt a child adopt more than one, (borne out by the completed questionnaires returned by adoptive parents in Alberta, wherein 558 out of 1,547 stated that this was not their first adoption, 807 out of 1,547 expressed a wish to adopt another child or children, and 262 were undecided), and until there is satisfactory evidence that the shortened period does not reduce the number of second and third placements, it would seem to be unwise to make any change in the probationary period.

In British Columbia, in view of the fact that the legislation has only been in effect since the first of the current year, and that the acceleration of documentation has not caught up with the shortened period, it is too early to evaluate the change.

In Ontario, adoptions are handled by more than fifty adoption agencies throughout the province. As reported by the Advisory Committee on Child Welfare in its 1964 report there is not a consistent policy with respect to concluding the process within the statutory six month period. Many agencies use this period, some extend the time and in at least one agency adoptions are not completed in under one year after placement.

As a considerable number of the questionnaires from adoptive parents indicated an unsatisfactory delay between application and approval, between approval and placement, and between completion of the one year probationary period and the granting of an adoption order, it would seem advisable to reduce these delays to a minimum before embarking on a change of legislation, the result of which is by no means certain but which is, in fact, being tested by other jurisdictions. This matter should be examined again when the six month period has been properly tested in other jurisdictions, and after further efforts have been made to reduce procedural delays in our own province.

#### **Reservation of Mrs. Bowker.**

"I would agree that it may be premature to shorten the one-year probationary period at present, but I would recommend that the subject



be kept under review for possible change in the near future. Certainly the trend in most jurisdictions is towards a six month period: four Canadian provinces have already done so, and two others (Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan) as well as the Yukon are contemplating a possible shortening of the period, mainly on the ground that it is better to do a good supervisory job in six months than prolong it unnecessarily for a year. According to the United Nations "Comparative Analysis of Adoption Laws", England and Denmark have a three month period, Switzerland and Yugoslavia, six months. Others, such as Uruguay (and Quebec) require two years.

"In my opinion, considerations for shortening the period in Alberta are two-fold: whether the supervisory function can be fulfilled in a shorter time, and whether sufficient staff is available to handle the work expeditiously. The purpose of the supervisory period is well stated in the Geneva Standards of Child Placing (1938) as being to test the soundness of the placement, and to give skilled placement workers an opportunity to help with adjustments to make the adoption a lasting success. Most problems according to some authorities appear in the first weeks or months following placement. The purpose of supervision is protection of the child and counselling of parents where needed. Whether this function can be adequately discharged in a shorter period depends on availability of competent staff and size of caseloads."

## V.—DETAILS IN ADOPTION ORDER AND BIRTH CERTIFICATE

Section 90 of the Child Welfare Act provides that the adoption order and all material used in connection with the petition shall be filed with the Clerk of the Court in a sealed packet, and opened only on order of a judge.

A certified copy of the adoption order is forwarded to the Director of Vital Statistics, on the basis of which a new birth certificate is issued in the child's adopted name, with the names of the adopting parents shown as parents, and nothing to indicate the child is adopted.

A problem of very considerable concern to adoptive parents is the fact that in the final adoption order, the natural surname of the child appears. It appears as well on the Petition and in the two supporting affidavits signed by the parents. The heading of the adoption order reads: "In the matter of a Petition for Adoption of ..... (child's name to be inserted), a .....male child, Birth Registration #.....".

It is an understandable desire of adopting parents that they should never be able to identify the natural parents, and that the circumstances of the child's birth should remain obscured from the child even though the fact of his adoption may, and probably should, be disclosed in due course. All through the adoption process the emphasis has been on protection of the child's identity. Though



the adopting parents are given a full history of the child, its identity is never disclosed. The appearance of the name in the Petition and final order is a violation of the rule of confidentiality that has prevailed throughout. It is understandable that cases of extreme distress have come to the attention of the Committee resulting from disclosure of the child's identity on the final order.

The procedural problem here arises from the need to identify the specific child being adopted, and for this reason the natural name of the child is used on the final order. As pointed out above, the disclosure of such name proves upsetting to many adoptive parents. Besides this, it violates the rule of confidentiality that has been paramount throughout the adoption proceedings. The Vital Statistics Act (Alberta Statutes 1959, c. 94, section 10 (2)) states that a new birth certificate will issue following an adoption order "upon production of evidence satisfactory to him (the Director) of the identity of the person". The problem thus becomes one of identifying the child sufficiently in the adoption order to enable a new birth certificate to be issued, without at the same time disclosing the child's original name. We recommend that the child be described in the Petition, affidavits and adoption order as follows:

"a child whose given names are shown as .....  
(Christian or given names only) in Birth Certificate #.....  
registered in the Department of Vital Statistics for the Province of  
Alberta."

If necessary, The Vital Statistics Act could be amended accordingly.

If the suggested procedure is found not workable, an alternative method, (concerning which Mrs. Bowker is not in complete accord) would be the filing with the Registrar of Vital Statistics, the Department and the Court of an exact copy of the present type of adoption order containing particulars of the child's natural surname, with the provision to the adopting parents of a certificate from the judge in a form similar to the following:

"I hereby certify that on the 23rd day of November, 1964, an Order of adoption was made by me whereby a male child born the 3rd day of April, 1964 and now known as Richard David Doe was legally adopted by John Doe and Mary Doe".

A Court file number would be adequate so that the Court file could be produced by order if further particulars are ever required.

It is true that the adopting parents would know the natural surname of the child, but there would be no necessity for further disclosure. If there is any question about the adequacy of the certifi-



cate to prove an adoption, legislation providing for the judge's certificate should also provide that the certificate of the judge when produced shall be acceptable in all respects as proof of the adoption order itself.

Concern was also expressed that on the birth certificate provided after adoption a child is shown as having been born at a given place although the adopting parents may never have resided there. This concern is natural where the place of birth is a small community the disclosure of which might lead to further disclosures to anyone curious enough to seek them, including the adopted child. Likewise, embarrassment to the child may result.

If the child is new born when placed, the place of birth can coincide with the residence of the adopting parents as shown on the order, but in the case of an older child there may be no way to relate the place of birth to the residence of the adopting parents at the time of the child's birth. This will have to be borne in mind in any corrective legislation which may be contemplated.

If the adopting mother or father should die before the probationary period is completed and the adoption is proceeded with, the names of both parents should be shown on the order and on the birth certificate.

## **VI.—RECIPROCAL REGISTRATION OF ADOPTIONS**

Reciprocal arrangements exist between Canadian provinces for the alteration of original birth certificates when the adoption is made in another province. Such reciprocal arrangements do not exist with the United Kingdom and certain other jurisdictions. An Alberta resident who had adopted a child born in England brought this matter to the attention of the Committee because he had been unable to obtain any birth certificate other than the original one, which in no way appeared to relate to his adopted child. This caused difficulty at school entrance and would later complicate applications for insurance, pension plans, passports, etc. An expansion to other jurisdictions of the current reciprocal procedures would certainly be desirable. If reciprocal arrangements can not be made, legislation should provide for a substitute certificate issued by the Registrar of Vital Statistics.

By an amendment to The Vital Statistics Act, 1959, provision could be made that on filing a certified copy of the adoption order and the original birth certificate, a certificate showing the name after adoption could be issued as follows:



This is to certify that the following particulars respecting  
..... are on file at the Department of  
Vital Statistics for the Province of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta:  
File Number: .....  
Name in Full: .....  
Place of Birth: .....  
Date of Birth: .....  
DATED at Edmonton, Alberta, this ..... day of  
....., A.D. 19.....

.....  
Registrar.

Such a certificate sufficiently formal in appearance should be acceptable for all purposes where a birth certificate is required.

## VII.—ADVERTISING

Under the heading of legislation we would like to comment on the present legislation on advertising with respect to adoptive children. The only provision dealing with the matter at all is to be found in section 67 which contains an utter prohibition against an owner or publisher of a newspaper or magazine published in Alberta accepting or publishing advertising dealing with the “adoption of a child”. This legislation is unfortunate in three ways, firstly, because it is contained in Part I of the Act relating to “NEGLECTED AND DEPENDENT CHILDREN” rather than in Part II relating to “ADOPTION OF CHILDREN” where it belongs; secondly, because by its wording it contains such a complete prohibition that it may unintentionally prohibit even the advertising programs conducted by the Department, now considered perfectly legal, and, thirdly, because it applies only to newspaper and magazine advertising and does not control advertising by radio or television or written or printed matter in any form other than a newspaper and magazine.

It is recommended that section 67 be deleted and that a new section replacing it be enacted in Part II. Such legislation should preclude advertising with respect to adoptions except such advertising as may originate with or be approved by the Superintendent. The concept of approved advertising is not new, as section 68 of The Child Welfare Act as passed in 1944 provided for it.

Such legislation as is proposed would permit, for example, useful advertising in the ordinary publications of church and welfare organizations regarding such matters as the number, age and sex of children available for placement with a view to adoption.

Further reference to advertising will appear later in the report under the heading of Practices and Procedures.



## VIII.—EMOTIONAL NEGLECT

At least two of the submissions made to the Committee contained reference to what can be described as “emotional neglect” as it relates to applications for permanent wardship of neglected children. It is quite apparent that one of the most serious manifestations of neglect appears in the emotional development of the child. If a child is simply hungry, or poorly housed or clothed, these matters can be cleared up very quickly and effectively. On the other hand, a child who is emotionally disturbed and is neglected in this aspect may quite quickly reach a point where his disturbance is incurable by known methods of treatment. Concern was expressed that the various classifications of neglect contained in section 9 (i) of the Act do not clearly encompass this type of neglect. The Committee feels that the matter is covered adequately, particularly by section 9 (i) (xiv) but if the Department feels there is any doubt about the adequacy of existing provisions the definition should be expanded so that there can be no possible doubt that this type of neglect is one to which the provisions for wardship, either temporary or permanent, will apply.

## IX.—PUBLIC REPRESENTATION ON CHILD WELFARE COMMISSION

During the hearings, several suggestions were received concerning greater involvement of the public in the formulation of policies with respect to child welfare. It was suggested that this aim might be accomplished by the appointment to the Child Welfare Commission of persons who are not in government service, even if this should require new legislation to enlarge the Commission. Alternative suggestions were the establishment of a permanent provincial advisory committee provided for by statute to work with the Child Welfare Commission, or regional committees to work with Regional Offices as liaison groups between government and the community.

Because of the frequency and duration of meetings of the Commission in connection with the due performance of its present duties, it is doubtful if members of the public whose contributions would be most useful could devote the time required.

As to the role of a permanent advisory committee, it seems that the proponents of such a committee do not have a very clear idea of what its functions might be. The Child Welfare Commission is responsible now to the Minister of Public Welfare and through him to the Cabinet and the Legislature, which is as it should be. The



addition of a new committee, which would not be answerable to the electorate, seems to be a misconception of proper governmental practice.

As for individual committees assigned to work with Regional Offices, this would seem to be a step in the wrong direction and likely to lead to variations in policy from office to office, as such committees would no doubt assume advisory functions. The example of Ontario is in point. Some of their administrative difficulties undoubtedly stem from the fact that there are more than fifty geographically constituted child welfare agencies throughout the province.

The need either for public representation on the Child Welfare Commission or for a central standing advisory committee or for regional committees, as suggested above, has not been demonstrated to the satisfaction of the members of your Committee.

## **X.—MUNICIPAL JURISDICTION—NEGLECTED CHILDREN**

Although legislation relating to the apprehension of neglected children is not adoption legislation as such, it is a matter that can be dealt with under this heading, as it affects to a degree the number of children coming into care and ultimately available for adoption.

Section 10 of the Act requires each municipality to appoint one or more child welfare workers to enforce the Act and section 12 provides that a child welfare worker may apprehend without a warrant and bring to a shelter or observation home a child he believes to be a neglected child.

It is true that under the Act a child welfare worker appointed by a municipality may not function as such until his appointment had been approved by the Commission. Moreover, the municipal worker, by the Act, is subject to regulations made by, and to the direction and supervision of, the Commission.

Notwithstanding the control exercised by the Commission a root problem would seem to be that in many municipalities, there are few suitable persons available for appointment as child welfare workers. Very often the municipal officers appointed are town policemen, town secretaries, municipal assessors, clergymen and housewives, all of whom have other duties quite distinct from their role as child welfare workers. The Commission cannot make a blanket rejection of the officers named by municipalities but is concerned that what "is considered one of the most demanding and skilled jobs in child welfare" is sometimes given to persons who have neither the time, the training nor the aptitude to do the work entrusted to them.



We are satisfied that in many of the smaller municipalities the administration of matters relating to neglected children is being handled well, but, as a general rule, it might be desirable that in such municipalities child welfare workers be appointed by the Province, both to ensure a uniform approach to child welfare problems and, hopefully, to ensure the appointment of better qualified workers.

Perhaps consideration might be given to amendment of the Act to provide that cities, or perhaps areas with a certain population, should appoint one or more full-time child welfare workers who, as presently provided in the Act, would be responsible to the Commission but that in other municipalities the child welfare workers be appointed by the Province.

Quite apart from the administrative problems involved in the transition of authority from the municipality to the Department, there is the disturbing influence on the child, who when apprehended by one authority with its welfare worker or group of welfare workers is later in the wardship proceedings brought under the jurisdiction of the workers from the Department. Any apprehension by any authority can only be a seriously disturbing experience for a child and to be shuttled from one authority to another can only compound the original distress.

In this connection, section 13 (2), by implication, requires the actual apprehension and removal of the child pending a written report to the Commission and an investigation by the Court, although it does provide that the child may be returned to its parents or guardian pending the completion of the report and investigation. We believe that provision should be made, in appropriate cases, for such a report and investigation without the actual apprehension of the child. In this way the child would not be apprehended at all unless it were found to be necessary.

## **XI.—LEGISLATION AFFECTING WELFARE HOMES**

In this study, your Committee is not directly concerned with municipal legislation, but having regard to its effect on child welfare homes, this is an appropriate time to deal with the matter. Certain provincial legislation is also material.

Members of your Committee visited two privately operated group homes in Calgary and one in Edmonton, two for teen-age boys, the other for teen-age girls, all of which are older buildings, formerly private residences. All provide a warm, pleasant home atmosphere and are carrying out a most useful function, looking after teen-age



children, when there is a marked lack of facilities for this purpose. Because of municipal zoning and building by-laws and regulations or because of provincial laws and policies, these homes are operating only after the removal of many barriers, or they are not operating to planned capacity. Our information is that the home for boys in Edmonton ran afoul of zoning provisions. At least one Calgary case dealt with herein was affected by building regulations.

Zoning and building regulations are substantially within the control of municipalities, particularly in the cities. These are the centres where group homes are most likely to be built and, are also most likely to run into rigid regulations. The Planning Act, either by way of development control or a zoning by-law, permits a municipality to stipulate the uses of land in any area and generally speaking, the districts available for group homes are limited. The City Act authorizes the incorporation of the whole or any part of The National Building Code into municipal building by-laws, and in Edmonton and Calgary, as well as in other municipalities, provisions of The National Building Code relating to "institutions" have been adopted and these provisions apply to group homes. These provisions govern such matters as structural requirements, electrical, fire, health and gas regulations. One of the most onerous requirements is that an "institution" of any size must be of masonry construction.

The Calgary home for teen-age girls was first proposed to be opened in 1960 in a large private home that had recently been renovated and could be acquired at a price which would make its operation economically feasible. The home was ideally suited for the purpose proposed because it was then, and is still, serving as a home for a large family. It was, however, not acceptable as an "institution" principally because it was not of masonry construction.

More recently the same group, a purely philanthropic organization, having purchased an older home in Calgary, was asked by the Department to obtain municipal approval of the home as an "institution" as a pre-requisite to licensing under The Welfare Homes Act. This home, while well suited to the housing of several teen-age girls, could not qualify as an "institution" under the Calgary Building By-law, again because it was not of masonry construction. Accordingly, no Provincial licence was issued.

The result of this decision was that the organization would not qualify for the per diem allowances necessary in order to operate to planned capacity, and a service, apparently urgently needed by the Province, has been seriously curbed.



If the municipal legislation here seems rigid, the Department's policy was not any less rigid. The suggestion made by the Department was that the municipal decision should be appealed, and the Department stated that it was **unable** to license the home without consideration of the decision by the city department. In fact, the municipal position could not be altered without an amending by-law whereas under The Welfare Homes Act there is provision for an institution to operate without a licence if the Minister of Public Welfare exercises his discretion to exempt a home from the licence requirement. Apparently the organization was not aware of the provision for ministerial exemption, certainly the correspondence from the Department did not mention it, and in fact left one with the impression that the sole stumbling block was municipal legislation.

We do not question the desirability of good construction and safety standards for nurseries and other child care homes, but when a combination of legislative provisions under The Welfare Homes Act and a municipal building by-law requires a home for four child wards to be of masonry construction, with numerous other special requirements, we have far more rigid standards than the average father of four children can afford for his family. When regulations impose standards which preclude not only the use of good existing buildings but, in so doing, preclude the establishment of a needed facility, they defeat their own purpose.

We recommend that the province investigate with municipalities the possibility of some changes in requirements for child welfare homes under The Welfare Homes Act, and related legislation and regulations, particularly with respect to approval of existing buildings. If the municipalities should not be willing to alter zoning, and building or other restrictions, the province will have to legislate accordingly.

## **XII.—ADOPTION OF ADULTS**

At least one case is known to your Committee where hardships occurred because the adoption of a Government ward was not completed before the child attained the age of twenty-one years. At present no authority exists for the Court to make an adoption order in this event.

Proper provision should be made to take care of the very few cases where an adoption order for an adult is sought. The Province of Ontario makes provision for adoption of a person over twenty-one but only where such person has in fact been in the custody of, brought up, maintained and educated by the applicant as his own child during infancy. We see no reason for any such limitation.



## B. PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

The following observations relative to practices and procedures are derived in considerable measure from the various submissions made to the Committee, and in some measure from studies and comparative data from other jurisdictions. However, as the form of questionnaire submitted to adopting parents follows generally the sequence through the application, the placement, the probation period, and the final approval, it is thought convenient to follow this sequence as much as possible in our analysis of Departmental practices and procedures. Some statistics referred to do not appear in the statistical analysis on Appendix "D" but are derived from the questionnaires returned.

### I.—ADOPTION INFLUENCES

The first question asked was "How did you become interested in adopting a child?" and, as will be seen in Appendix "D", 1,279 of the 1,547 replies show a specific influence. As by far the greatest number of the 548 reporting "other influences" gave such reasons as sterility or inability to have another child, which are not properly outside influences, and would likely be applicable to most applicants for adoptive children, no particular significance can be attached to this figure.

The largest total, 250 replies, indicated that the applicant's interest in adoption stemmed from medical advice. This figure points up the importance of continuing and enlarged liaison between the Department and the medical profession. It is apparent that many doctors are not fully informed as to basic adoption procedures, and are not able to advise patients as to the initial steps. Continuing distribution by the Department to the medical profession of pamphlets relating to adoption or of material for inclusion in medical publications would make basic adoption information available to childless couples at the time when they are most receptive. Such pamphlets might be provided as well to clergymen and family counsellors, although the latter group are undoubtedly presently informed as to adoption procedures.

Ninety-two questionnaires show that the applicants were influenced by newspaper or television advertisements. Since the Department adopted its present policy of advertising only in March of 1963 the questionnaires which cover placements in the calendar years 1963 and 1964 illustrate the importance of publicity. Reports



from other provinces indicate stepped-up publicity campaigns as a general policy and we would endorse this policy in Alberta.

We believe the expansion could well include more panel discussions and interviews with Department personnel on radio and television, feature stories, and more contact with service clubs, church and other organizations, which should be specifically advised of the availability of speakers. The advertising should be as personal as possible, consistent with the due protection of the mother surrendering her child, the child itself, and the adopting parents.

It is important in the advertising to dispel misconceptions which have arisen over the years when there were more parents applying than there were children available. The questionnaires indicated that many parents had expected to be refused because they lived in trailers or could not provide a separate room for each child in the family, or because a fixed income of so much per month was required. The Department, in the last few years has become much more flexible in all these matters than it formerly was, but the misconceptions do exist so far as the public is concerned.

The most significant influence indicated by the questionnaires would appear to be "remarks of friends", which are stated to have influenced 163 of the couples reporting back. This means that the high quality of case work generally resulting in good placements is a determining factor not only in cases where a future placement with the particular family is concerned, but in the overall picture of public relations. Clearly the best advertisement the Department has is a satisfied customer.

## II.—FIRST INTERVIEW

The Department has recognized the importance of the first official interview and only in relatively rare cases are husband and wife not together at this time. Some comment was made about the lack of privacy of some of the interview rooms in the various regional offices and this is also reflected in the questionnaires submitted by the regional offices. A common complain was that the Public Assistance and the Child Welfare offices adjoin or are intermingled and that the waiting room available is used for applicants for public assistance and prospective adopting couples. The actual interviewing rooms lack privacy and conversations can be heard through the partitions. Not all regional offices were visited by members of your Committee, but it was obvious in some cases that the accommodation left much to be desired, and it is recommended that in offices where the problem exists, immediate remedial action should be taken.



With respect to the quality of the initial interview, 1,379 obtained a good understanding of how the application would be handled, 116 acquired only a fair understanding, 23 a poor understanding and the others made no comment.

After the interview, 1,419 were "enthusiastic" about proceeding, 80 were "uncertain", 9 were "not too interested", and the others made no comment.

The above indicates a great measure of satisfaction with the initial interview and an examination of the few questionnaires indicating dissatisfaction shows criticism of immature and inexperienced welfare workers, and this vein of criticism is apparent, where criticism exists, throughout the entire questionnaire. Your Committee is of the opinion that, where possible inexperienced workers should not be used for this very important interview in the adoption procedure.

### III.—SPECIFICATIONS OF CHILDREN APPLIED FOR

The Committee understood that most applicants preferred a female child, and, as the questionnaires indicated a proportion of approximately 4 to 3 in favour of a male child, it seems likely that the adopting parents in some cases were influenced to apply for a male child on being told that there could be a longer waiting period for a female placement.

Most parents not applying for a specific child wanted a child new-born up to 2 months old, and virtually none wanted a child of over 4 years, indicating, of course, the desirability of placing a child as soon as possible after birth. Ideally, perhaps, the child should be placed by the time it leaves the hospital, but other important factors must be considered, some of which will be dealt with later under this heading, some under the heading Obstacles to Adoption.

As would be expected the great majority of couples applied for white children, the actual numbers being 1,371 white, 53 Metis, 39 other, with the others not specified.

The questionnaires indicated that only in very rare cases were physical characteristics or nationality material at the time of application. On the other hand, it will be seen that frequently the parents commented on the matching of the child to the adopting family's characteristics, and it is obvious that the Department pays a great deal of attention to this aspect of placement.



#### **IV.—DELAY BEFORE HEARING FROM REGIONAL OFFICE**

A question was asked concerning the delay after applicants submitted their formal application and supporting documents, before the applicants heard anything from the regional office. An unreasonable delay was reported by 366 out of 1,547, and the average elapsed time was roughly from two to three months. The reports indicate that in many instances the delay was caused by the fact that the persons whose names were submitted as references were dilatory in completing and returning the forms.

It has been the practice of the Department to send out form letters if documentation has not been completed within a month. As long as the Department makes reasonable efforts to notify the applicants of any lack of essential documents, it is hard to see how the Department can be called to account for a delay in this part of the procedure.

#### **V.—DELAY BEFORE INITIAL HOME STUDY**

Another question was asked concerning the delay between the completion of the application (including the provision of all documents) and the initial home study. The results indicated that 1,392 of 1,547 were satisfied and only 155 considered the delay excessive. In fact, the statistics would indicate that by far the greatest number received the first home study within the first month after completion of the application, although 281 waited two months, 216 waited three months, 85 waited four months, and a reducing number waited for periods up to a year.

It seems to the Committee that the Department should take every step to minimize this particular delay, because in the ordinary case none of it can be attributed to the applicants.

#### **VI.—QUALITY OF HOME STUDY**

In an examination of the first home study itself, 1,395 considered it "well conducted", 127 considered it "fair" and 25 considered it "poorly conducted"; 1,444 considered it "very helpful" in understanding the procedure, 85 considered it "fair" and 18 considered it of "no value" for such purpose.

This indicates a high standard of case work. It was evident that the satisfaction was province-wide and that no particular region came in for specific criticism.



A number thought that questions relating to such matters as the education and financial standing of relatives were irrelevant, and an examination of a number of current files indicates that workers often ask for personal details beyond those suggested in Appendix "B" to the Child Welfare Policy Manual issued as a guide by the Department. Some parents resent this attitude on the part of the worker but it is obvious that many others do not, and this is just a further indication of the requirement for mature, experienced workers.

In cases involving second or third adoptions, still others found these detailed questions unnecessary and, indeed, in such cases there seems to be little reason to extend the home study beyond the point of ascertaining that circumstances remain similar to those prevailing at the time of the previous placement.

## **VII.—DELAY BEFORE NOTIFICATION OF ACCEPTANCE**

The third point in the adoption procedure where delays can occur is in the period between the home study and notification that the application has been accepted. Again, by far the greater number were notified within a month of the completion of the home study but 170 waited two months, 186 waited three months, 87 waited four months, 45 waited five months, and 35 waited six months, with a total of 16 waiting longer than six months.

The delays here result from poor staff work, heavy case loads and changes of workers, and, almost invariably, could be eliminated.

As soon as the home has been approved for adoption, one might expect the placement of the child almost immediately, but for a variety of reasons this is seldom the case. The questionnaires showed that 103 received the child in the first week, 98 in the second week, 63 in the third week, 168 at the end of the first month, 191 after six weeks, 164 in two months, 116 in ten weeks, 110 in three months, and in a substantial number of cases the applicants waited even longer.

As previously indicated, certain factors affecting the placement date will be dealt with under the heading Obstacles to Adoption, but mention might be made at this time of factors that tend to postpone the placement, which factors are in the interest of the adopting parents and the child. The questionnaires show that 253 of the adopting couples were particularly pleased with the way the child matched the adopting parents and other members of the adopting family both as to physical characteristics and background. It is obvious that these results can not be obtained with hurried placements.



Other factors are the parents' request for the type of child which is difficult to find, and the general desire for very young babies. A further important factor, the religion of the child and deferred placement because of a statement as to religious preference, will be dealt with later.

Notwithstanding the number of cases where delays in placement were either unavoidable or in the interest of the adopting couple and the child, a significant number of cases were brought to the attention of your Committee, both in the questionnaires and at the hearings, of delays in placement for which there appeared to be no explanation other than the fact of a shortage of caseworkers with an attendant heavy work-load on the members of the present staff.

### VIII.—QUALITY OF CASEWORK

One of the questions asked adopting couples was whether they had received all the help and advice necessary at the time the child was first placed. Of 1,547 returns, 1,342 claimed they received all the help they needed, although many stated they needed none because they had previous experience with new-born children. Another 133 complained of insufficient help and advice, and 72 had no comment.

Of those who believed they should have had further advice there seemed to be a lack of information concerning medical information on the child's formula, feeding and sleeping habits during the time when the child was in foster care. Any steps which can be taken to improve this situation would certainly be worthwhile.

Mention was made in a number of cases of the assistance received from the Victorian Order of Nurses and from the social worker involved in the case.

Another question was asked concerning the assistance received during the supervisory period and it would appear that the average number of visits to the home by the caseworker was two or three. Of those replying, 1,341, as against 206, considered the visits helpful and 1,491, as against 56, considered the visits frequent enough, and it is obvious that the work of the Department in this area is satisfactory to say the least.

An occasional couple complained about the frequency of the visits and felt they were being "spied upon" by the worker. It is obvious that there is no validity to this complaint and that during the probationary period casework is of the utmost importance and adopting parents should be led to expect that the progress of the child will



be examined from time to time. The quality of casework is demonstrated by the fact that 1,502 couples stated they received all the help they needed throughout the probationary period.

### **IX.—DELAY BEFORE FINAL ORDER**

The fifth and final point in the adoption procedure where delays were reported is in the period following completion of the probationary year until the final adoption order was signed. The period reported varied all the way from one week to twenty-one months, but the average delay seems to be three months or lightly more and it appears that this is a place in the procedure where delays should, as nearly as possible, be eliminated. The uncertainty created in the minds of the parents if a delay occurs at this stage of the procedure is very apparent from a reading of the questionnaires. It is obvious that the signing of the final order is a real milestone for most parents, and that subconsciously they worry about the adoption until it is completed. There seems to be no reason, other than staff shortage, why the parents should be kept waiting more than a month, after the completion of the probationary period, for the final papers.

### **X.—SATISFACTION WITH PROCEDURE**

In response to the question as to what pleased the parents most in the entire procedure, there were 253 favourable comments concerning the speed of the process, 729 concerning the welfare workers, 253 concerning the matching, 198 were pleased with the entire procedure and 114 made no comment. When asked what, if anything, displeased them, there were 492 complaints from parents about delays, 13 about welfare workers, 672 complained variously concerning medical history, formula and foster home information as commented upon earlier. A number complained that they had been unable to learn if and when the child had been baptized, and it is important that the Department obtain and make available baptismal records. Several complained that their newborn boys had not been circumcised, and a fixed policy of early circumcision would avoid the distress to the parents and the child if the operation should be required later.

### **XI.—PROSPECTS FOR FURTHER ADOPTIONS**

To the question "Is this your first adoption?", 989 replied affirmatively as against 558 reporting one or more previous adoptions. When asked if they hoped to adopt another child or children, 807 had such intention, with 478 who had not, and 262 who were undecided. These statistics bear out the opinion of the workers in the



Department that people who have previously adopted constitute a most promising group for further placements.

## XII.—WORKING MOTHERS

The next question touched on one of the much discussed social questions of the day—the working mother.

The Department can exercise a direct form of control over the working mother only during the probationary period and clearly it is the policy of the Department that only in rare instances should the mother be permitted to work during this period. The likelihood of a mother returning to work after the probationary period may, however, affect the attitude of some social workers toward placement, and it might be well to consider some of the views presented on the question of working mothers.

Of the parents returning questionnaires 1,468 stated that they did not feel that their home could have given their adopted child proper care if the mother had been working full-time, 54 thought that they might, and 25 thought proper care could have been given. The opposition to part-time employment was not as pronounced but 1,295 thought that proper care could not be given if the mother should be employed part-time, 82 thought it might, and 170 thought proper care could have been given.

Virtually all in both categories who thought proper care might have been given or who were satisfied that it could have been given, qualified their answers by saying that this was only because satisfactory child care arrangements were possible.

It may be that these statistics do not quite reflect the facts and that the replies were in part dictated by what the parents knew to be Departmental policy, but there is no doubt that most of the adopting mothers genuinely felt that working away from the home was not consistent with the best interests of the child.

During the hearings, it was evident from the expressions of opinion from professional social agencies, both private and governmental, that the number of working mothers shows a marked increase and that the incidence of neglect and delinquency is no greater among the children of working mothers. Dr. Horne and Dr. Atkinson of the Provincial Guidance Clinic at Calgary presented a very valuable analysis relating to emotional disturbance in 152 adopted children some of whose mothers worked full-time or part-time and concluded with respect to working mothers that:

“Where the adoptive mother works full-time or part-time this factor does not appear, in itself, as even a contributing factor towards the adopted youngster’s disturbance.”



Still others at the hearings made the valid observation that working mothers, particularly those in part-time employment, might well spend less time away from the home than a mother heavily engaged in social activities or in community work.

Having regard to the great increase in the number of children coming into care and the fact that there has been in the first few months of 1965 a decrease in the number of adoption applications, we would suggest that the Department should be quite flexible in considering exceptions to its established policy on working mothers, especially with respect to older children. This might lead to placements in an appreciable number of excellent homes in the lower income groups.

If the increase in adoptable children continues and the problem becomes even more acute, the Department will, as a matter of policy, have to consider the working mother as a suitable parent, and in this case consideration will have to be given to the establishment of extensive day care centres.

This brings to a conclusion the examination of the parents' questionnaires, but there are a number of matters relating to Practices and Procedures remaining to be dealt with.

### **XIII.—SINGLE PARENTS**

The question of working mothers logically leads to a consideration of the question of adoptive placements with single persons.

The Act simply provides that where an adopting parent has a spouse competent to join in the adopting petition the spouse shall do so, but it also provides that any adult person wishing to adopt may apply to do so. Since the Department does not place barriers in the way of unwed mothers who wish to keep their children in cases where they are able to provide for them properly, it would seem logical for the Department to accept single women as adopting parents in appropriate cases, and it is known that in at least one case a professional woman whose duties do not require her to be absent from home for the full day, has succeeded in adopting two children who otherwise would have been hard to place.

The related case, of course, is that of a widow or widower who might be quite able to take care of children. Cases have occurred where the adopting father or mother has died during the probationary period and the adoption has been completed satisfactorily by the surviving spouse.



The single person may not constitute a very likely source for an adoptive placement, but it would be wrong to have a policy of refusing petitions solely because of the single status of the petitioner.

#### **XIV.—AGE OF ADOPTING PARENTS AND OTHER RESTRICTIONS**

In its submission to the Committee, the Department cited as examples of less restrictive policies the fact that a few years ago couples over forty years of age, couples who live in trailers, couples where one parent was physically handicapped, and couples with a mentally retarded child would not have been approved as adopting parents, whereas now it is possible for children to be placed in homes in these circumstances. It would hardly be correct to say that the Department now has settled policies on such placements but the Commission appears to be ready to consider the merits of any given case involving any problem factor. The virtue of the Commission's position is not that it has established affirmative policies, but rather that it appears now to have no fixed policy against placement in unusual circumstances.

Of particular interest is the recognition by the Commission that many fathers are about forty-five years of age when the youngest natural child is born, and the Commission has been willing to make placements with not more than forty-five years age difference between the older parent and the adopted child. This seems to be a sound approach and with the increasing imbalance between the numbers of children in care and adoption applications, this Committee is satisfied that there will be many appropriate cases where the Commission can accept a difference of forty-five years or even more between the age of the older parent and that of the child. The older child very quickly comes into the hard to place category and older parents who have brought up their own family could provide a limited number of satisfactory placements and should be encouraged to do so.

#### **XV.—SUBSIDIZING ADOPTIONS**

Cases were seen in foster homes where the child was devoted to the foster parents and they to the child, and where the only obstacle to adoption was an economic one. This was discussed with members who made the submission on behalf of the Alberta Association of Social Workers, and the suggestion was made that there might well be some way to continue a subsidy after a foster placement is changed to an adoptive one.

The Committee does not know how such a subsidy could be satisfactorily worked out. It may be ideal to have all children who



are in permanent foster homes adopted and foster parents should certainly be encouraged to adopt, but we can not recommend a policy of subsidies to adoptive parents. Any possibility of a suggestion that parents adopted for monetary reasons could only be detrimental to the child's welfare.

## **XVI.—APPEALS**

Two briefs submitted at the hearings dealt specifically with a matter of policy that may also involve legislation. This is the position of rejected applicants. Your Committee was advised by Departmental officials that any rejected applicant could appeal his rejection to the Minister of Public Welfare, and, if still rejected, could appeal further to the Cabinet. An examination of the Act discloses no statutory appeal and it is unlikely that the rejected applicant would be aware of any right of appeal unless the worker concerned saw fit to advise him thereof. We were assured that the Departmental policy requires the worker to give this advice.

It was well argued before the Committee that the right of appeal, at least in the last instance, should be to a Court so that there would be no suggestion that the Minister or the Cabinet were simply upholding the decision of their own staff.

It is not known how many times an appeal to a Court would be used, but in any event the Act should spell out whatever right of appeal does exist.

There are many cases where the Commission, in the course of its investigation, has learned of inadequacies on the part of proposed parents, resulting in their rejection. These inadequacies include alcoholism, infidelity and other evidences of instability in the home, and the Department is to be commended for its discretion in dealing with these difficult cases. The worker concerned is often obliged to submit to vitriolic criticism from rejected applicants without being able to answer in any way.

## **XVII.—SURRENDERS**

A problem that was discussed at considerable length by various organizations submitting briefs was the counselling of the unmarried mother concerning the surrender of her child.

It was urged on the one hand that she should have the benefit of the most complete counselling both before and after the birth but it was apparent in many cases that the opportunity for professional counselling only presented itself when she was admitted to the maternity ward. On the other hand it was urged that the baby should



be placed with its adoptive parents as soon after birth as possible and that for this reason the surrender procedure should be accelerated.

While there is much to be said for the latter viewpoint it does not justify the use of any pressure whatever on the mother, and the policy of the Department that she should be presented with as many material facts as possible and left to make up her own mind is thoroughly sound. Obviously, of course, if she wishes to seek the advice of her physician, clergyman, or other private counsellor, she should be given every opportunity to do so.

At the time surrender is being considered the social worker should make it very clear to the mother that there is no conditional surrender in this Province and that unlike some other jurisdictions, the mother will not be able to have the child returned later. Our Courts have confirmed that surrender in this Province is absolute.

### **XVIII.—ROLE OF PRIVATE GROUPS IN ADOPTION**

After discussing the matter with several groups who made submissions to the Committee, it is evident that none of the private agencies want to assume any leading role in the actual adoption process, and nobody favoured the institution in this Province of any system providing a duplication of services.

The Department envisaged the role of private agencies in the total adoption or welfare picture principally as a preventive role, —to reduce, through family counselling and similar services, the number of children coming into care.

Mention should be made, however, of the role of the volunteer groups in the finding of foster and adoptive homes. Church groups and other private groups co-operating with the Department can perform, and have performed, a very useful function in locating prospective homes.

A specific example was given where communication between the Province and a private agency might well be improved. As a result of an adoption appeal conducted by the agency with the approval of the Department, a number of interested persons phoned the private agency, and apparently were then referred to the regional office. Only very few got in touch with the regional office. In such cases we think the Department should encourage private agencies to offer their services in arranging interviews and otherwise assisting the prospective adopter, and, of course, the private agencies for their part, should at the outset tell the inquirer of their willingness to assist in any way.



## C. CHILDREN AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION AND FUTURE TRENDS

The Committee was asked in paragraph (3) of the terms of reference to report on this aspect of the adoption problem.

It is not so long since there were more applicants than there were children available but, as appears from the Annual Reports of the Department for recent years, this situation is now reversed. In the year from March 31, 1961 to March 31, 1962 there was a net increase of approximately 150 children in care—the following year the net increase was 450 and from March 31, 1963 to March 31, 1964 in spite of an intensive and well directed publicity drive for adoption homes the increase was nearly 250. Since the conclusion of the hearings it has become evident that in the early months of 1965 the situation has deteriorated further, partly because more unwed mothers have surrendered their children, partly because more children have been made permanent wards by Court Order and partly because there has been a marked decline reported in adoption applications.

Any shortage of adoption homes might be accounted for by the low birth rate in the depression years resulting in a shortage of parents of the right age currently, and by improvement in medical knowledge of infertility. The increase in children in care can be accounted for in part by the post-war population increase which now results in a high increase in illegitimate births and child surrenders.

There is no doubt that the trend, at least for the next five years, will result in an increased number of children available for placement with a possible decrease in the number of adoption applications, or, in any event, a rate of increase that will not keep pace with the numbers of adoptable children.

The first factor can be countered in a number of ways, good family counselling to reduce the number of broken homes, good counselling for the unwed mother to prevent a recurrence of the illegitimate birth, good counselling and enforcement procedures insofar as the putative father is concerned to reduce the likelihood of him becoming an offender again. The second factor must be attacked with imagination and good publicity so that current misconceptions of adoption requirements are dispelled and policies developed which will enlarge in every way consistent with the child's welfare the field of acceptable applicants for adoption. Coupled with this there should be a reduction in procedural delays which must not be attended by a reduction in the quality of case work.



## D. OBSTACLES TO ADOPTION

The Committee is asked to deal with this in paragraph (4) of the terms of reference.

A great many of the matters dealt with heretofore could in fact be classified as obstacles to adoption, but as the popular concept is that the major obstacles are either religious or racial, these factors and certain related factors have been reserved for scrutiny under this heading.

### I.—MIXED RACE CHILDREN

In March of 1964, as appears by the Annual Report of the Department of Public Welfare we find a total of 2,805 permanent wards not in adoptive homes. While the Annual Report does not disclose it in detail the proportion of Metis children in this category runs approximately 40% of the total.

From the 1,547 questionnaires returned by adoptive parents, it appears that only 53, or about 3% requested a Metis child.

These figures graphically illustrate what is certainly one of the major "obstacles" in adoption—the problem of mixed race placements.

The mixed race problem in this Province is almost solely a Metis problem since there are relatively few other children of mixed race coming into care. The Department's problem is, of course, manifold, that of counselling and other prevention measures in an effort to reduce the number of such children coming into care, and the care and placement of more than 1,000 mixed race permanent wards in care at present, together with those expected to be taken into care in coming years.

One of the remedies proposed for reduction of the backlog of Metis children in care is placement of them with Metis families. If there is any type of situation where the Department might properly consider subsidies to adoptive parents certainly it would be in such placements. A number of senior social workers interviewed were quite emphatic that they would not hesitate to place a child in a "suitable Metis home" because they were convinced that the child would have love and affection and a relative degree of security. They would not be averse to providing subsidies because the vast majority of these families are presently on social assistance.



Apart from the fact that overcrowding in most of these homes is so extreme that they could not possibly qualify as "suitable" homes, even by reduced material standards, this proposal would only compound the Metis problem in the future inasmuch as these unfortunate people live largely in areas where there is a depressed economy, or, in some cases, where no economy of any kind exists.

To place children in circumstances where their dependence on government welfare is a virtual certainty is to perpetuate the improvement way of life which these people now have.

If the economic situation of the Metis should improve markedly, the Metis home should be considered for placement, particularly of older children in care. It must be observed that there are measures under way for the improvement of the economic lot of the Metis.

Certain senior welfare workers in the Department expressed the view that perhaps the Department had been too hasty both in accepting surrenders from Metis mothers and in seeking to apprehend Metis children as neglected children. It was reported that in many cases marriage follows the birth of the first child and many children surrendered might in these circumstances have been kept by the mothers if the surrenders had not been arranged too early. The tendency to take apprehension proceedings is perhaps not as marked now as formerly, but because of the economic conditions of the Metis even minor matters involving Metis children may too often have been considered as evidence of neglect. As a rule, the incidence of serious neglect of children among Metis is not any more pronounced than among the general population. The Department should be wary of these problems.

A great number of the parents of Metis children taken into care are only nominally of a given faith but the children have been entered in the Department's rolls as Roman Catholic or Protestant depending on the religion given by the parent. According to the 1961 federal census only about 25% of the population of Alberta was Roman Catholic but almost 90% of the Metis children in care were classified as Roman Catholic. With very few inter-faith placements this disproportion is an obvious problem. It would be idle to suggest that the removal of religious barriers would resolve the question of Metis placements but some young Metis children could have been placed in Protestant homes and no Protestant Metis children were available to fill the applications.

It has been suggested that Roman Catholics are not as ready as Protestants to accept Metis children but having regard to the per-



centage of each faith in the total population, the records of both groups are comparable.

While there are complications because of the stated religion of Metis children coming into care, it is evident from the completed questionnaires and other information provided that the problem of Metis placements is still basically a racial or cultural problem.

## **II.—CROSS-BORDER PLACEMENTS**

The Department has reported on a number of excellent placements of Metis children in the United States. In some of the Western states there seems to be a particular appeal in a child with native Indian blood. The Howson Commission in 1948 found that there had been no cross-border “traffic” or “babies for export” policy in the adoptive placement of Alberta children and the annual figures for subsequent years show no marked increase in the numbers of cross-border placements.

One of the hurdles encountered in cross-border adoption placements is the residence requirement in Alberta during the probation period. The requirement can not be altered except by order of a judge under section 79 of the Act. Because of some problems with the form of the legislation, section 79 was amended in 1965. This amendment does not seem to be adequate and we would recommend instead that section 79 as it stood prior to the 1965 amendment should be amended by adding new subsections (3) and (4) substantially similar to the following:

79 (3) Where the Commission certifies in writing that the proposed adopter, being a non-resident of Alberta, proposes to remove the child beyond the boundaries of Alberta, and that the proposed adopter is a fit and proper person to have the care and custody of the child, the provisions of subsections (1)(a) and (2)(a) shall not apply.

79 (4) Where the Commission certifies in writing that the one year period of residence has been partially completed and the proposed adopter has decided to live outside Alberta, and that the proposed adopter is a fit and proper person to have the care and custody of the child, the provisions of subsections (1)(a) and (2)(a) shall not apply.

Having regard to the great number of children now in care, particularly older Metis and Indian children who might not otherwise find a home, we would urge that the Department follow a vigorous policy of cross-border placements.

## **III.—RELIGIOUS FACTOR IN ADOPTION**

As previously observed, many consider this problem the thorniest in the entire adoption field, and it has been a popular misconception



that inter-faith placements were prohibited under the Act. While the Act does not preclude such placements, and there have been inter-faith adoption orders, especially in the case of foster parent applications, the Department's policy has been set against inter-faith placements.

The Departmental surrender forms provide for the surrendering parent to show her religion as Protestant, Roman Catholic or other, if of a non-Christian faith, and unless the surrendering parent specifically states in another form that she wishes her child to be brought up in a faith other than her own, the religion of the parent as declared in the surrender forms governs the designated religion of the child. In like manner, neglected children coming into care under wardship orders are placed into a category of Protestant, Roman Catholic or a non-Christian denomination with the religion of the parents as the determining factor.

Once a child has been so identified as a Protestant, Roman Catholic, or a member of a non-Christian religion, the Department must be wary of placement with parents of a different faith. At the completion of the placement period, an adoption order might be refused because under section 80 of the Act, the judge, must be satisfied with the propriety of the adoption having regard, amongst other things, to the religion in which the child has been "brought up", and the religion of the proposed adopter.

A refusal at the end of the placement period is, of course, extremely hard on both the parents and the child, and any publicity attendant on such a refusal would damage the adoption program.

Different provinces have approached the problem of the religious factor in legislation in different ways. In several recent child welfare statutes there is no reference in the adoption provisions to the religion of either the parent or the child. This does not provide the full answer because the judge might still consider religion a factor governing the exercise of his discretion.

In Manitoba, a 1961 amendment to child welfare legislation enabled a surrendering parent to state that she had no religious preference for her child. A 1963 amendment provides that if after a reasonable time a child for whom there is a stated religion has not been placed in a suitable home of such faith, an application can be made that the provision regarding religion be waived to permit placement with parents of a different religion. Apart from any other considerations, the possibility of a new and further delay in the



adoption process because of a further court reference does not commend this procedure.

A very large number of the persons making submissions to the Committee contended that religion as a factor in adoptive placements should not be considered at all. Under questioning it was clear that a number of these persons meant that they did not wish the religion of a child or a parent to form an actual barrier to adoption, but they did not wish to rule out a statement as to parental preference. They were unanimous in favouring the opportunity for a parent to state that she has **no** religious preference. Various percentages were suggested as to the number of parents who would state a preference. The Manitoba experience as reported for 1964 is that about one half of all surrendering mothers state that they have no religious preference in the adoptive placement of their children. The result has been that the "religious problem" as such has been quite effectively resolved. The legislative changes have, however, failed to resolve the problem of mixed race placements.

Briefs submitted by Roman Catholic and Jewish organizations both through clerical and lay representation stressed the position of these organizations that children of these faiths should be placed with parents of the same faith.

Protestant clergymen of several denominations at the hearings were questioned as to whether they would think it desirable that a Protestant mother surrendering a child should be able to state a denominational preference. They emphasized that they would not wish a statement of religious preference to operate as a barrier or even as a deterrent to adoptive placement, but with this reservation, they thought it would be desirable that a Protestant mother be able to state a denominational preference.

The members of the Committee are of the opinion that the principle of religious preference of surrendering parents should be recognized. If there were no other reason for its recognition one compelling argument should settle the issue. Undoubtedly many mothers who would be best advised to surrender their children would keep them if they could not state a religious preference for them.

The question of how best to recognize a parental religious preference without placing obstacles in the way of adoptive placements is difficult. We believe, however, that the present situation in this province can be substantially improved. We are of the opinion that any changes in legislation and in practice should not operate



so as to give any particular faith any advantage or supposed advantage over others and any changes implemented should be equally applicable to all.

We would recommend legislation similar to the following suggested draft sections:

- (a) A parent surrendering her child for adoption shall be given the right if she so wishes to state that she has no preference as to the religion in which the child is to be brought up.
- (b) A parent surrendering a child for adoption shall be given the right if she so wishes to state a preference as to the religion in which the child is to be brought up, but such religious preference shall expire upon the issuance of a certificate by the Child Welfare Commission, at any time after one year from the date of surrender, certifying that reasonable efforts have been made to comply with such religious preference.
- (c) In the case of a child made a permanent ward of the Government pursuant to Part I of the Act, if the Child Welfare Commission issues a certificate that reasonable efforts have been made to place the child in a home of the religion, if known, of the child's natural parents, the child may be placed in any home deemed suitable by the Child Welfare Commission.

Such legislation would require alteration of sections 74 (1) (a) (ii), 74 (1) (a) (iii), 74 (1) (b) and 80 (b). It would have to be borne in mind in framing legislation that these sections, insofar as they relate to children surrendered with a statement of religious preference as in (c) hereinafter set out, would still be relevant if the preference has not expired.

To comply with the above a new surrender form would be required:

The following is suggested and should be completed in every case with the parent signing either (a), (b) or (c):

**Statement of Religious Preference in Adoption Placement**

- (a) I have no religious preference as to the adoptive placement of my child.

.....  
Signature.  
  
or

- (b) I prefer that my child be brought up in the .....  
Church but I do not wish my statement of preference to prevent the earliest possible adoptive placement of my child in any home deemed suitable by the Child Welfare Commission.

.....  
Signature.  
  
or



- (c) I desire that my child be brought up in the .....  
Church and acknowledge that I have been informed that if a suitable  
adoptive home with parents of such faith can not be found within  
one year from this date, the Child Welfare Commission may so  
certify in writing and then place my child for adoption in any home  
deemed suitable by the Commission.

.....  
Signature.

It will be noted that the above proposed changes in legislation distinguish between surrendered children and children made wards by order of the Court, placing no time restriction on placement of the latter group. This is essentially in keeping with the views of some persons making submissions to the Committee that the parents of neglected children made wards could not expect the same opportunity to express a preference. The Department should make every effort, nevertheless, to place such children in homes of the parents' religion, and this applies particularly to older children.

A word must be said about the length of time during which the preference would obtain. The Committee recognizes the value of early adoptive placement and acknowledges the views expressed that if a preference is permitted it should be for a shorter period. We are, however, of the opinion that a shorter period than one year would not give any real effect to the preference.

In all cases where a parent states a religious preference the Department and the Child Welfare Commission must be prepared to honour it or it will be necessary to restore judicial review on the religious factor. As previously observed, members of the Commission submitted that all their actions are subject to review by the Minister and by the Cabinet. Undoubtedly this would apply to the granting of certificates by the Commission under this part, but unless notification is given a parent would not be aware of the granting of a certificate.

Members of the Commission stated at the hearings that if inter-faith adoptions were permitted it would allow greater latitude and placements could often be made more advantageously. This argument is not accepted in cases where a religious preference is stated, since in these cases the most advantageous placement from the parent's standpoint would be in accordance with the preference stated.

The Department will have to provide regular information to governing bodies of the various religions regarding the requirements from time to time for adoptive homes and they will have to continue their best efforts to place the child for whom a preference has been stated in a home of that faith.



## E. FOSTER INSTITUTIONS AND FOSTER HOMES

The Committee is asked to deal with this subject in paragraph (5) of the terms of reference.

All child care institutions in the Province were visited by one or more members of the Committee and the need for the various special services provided was amply demonstrated. In addition, numerous foster homes were visited by Committee members.

Where it is possible, of course, an adoptive home is the ideal solution for the child in care, but there are many reasons why a number of our wards must be in foster homes or institutions on a temporary or permanent basis. Next to an adoptive placement, a foster home, either temporary or permanent, would generally make for the best placement but many children for reasons of age, emotional instability, physical or mental handicap, or size of family group, are best cared for in one of the many types of child care institutions.

Members of the Committee were struck with the high quality of foster homes visited. These were selected at random and usually visited unannounced. It was stated at the hearings that the selection of foster homes should be done as carefully as the selection of adoptive homes. This is undoubtedly so, particularly in view of the fact that many foster parents later adopt the child.

It is sometimes alleged that some foster parents are "in it for the money", and, financial considerations may be important in some cases, but it was obvious from the homes that were visited that whether or not money was a factor, the children were receiving proper care. As was observed at the hearings, the remuneration is only "adequate" and if the parents did not have a genuine interest in children, they would not offer their services as foster parents, and could augment their income in much easier ways.

In cases where a child has been placed in a series of foster homes, there has been an unfortunate tendency in some to condemn the homes out of hand rather than to recognize that the reason for the multiple placements may be that the child is a difficult child.

The Committee feels that there are many misconceptions concerning the foster home program, and that just as steps are being taken to enlighten the public in adoption matters, the area of foster home publicity should not be neglected.



As has been observed, the reason for multiple placements may be that the child is a difficult child, and the Department, which recognizes the damage that may be done through multiple foster placements, should be alert to ensure the earliest possible placement of such a child in a specialized institution if this would best suit his needs.

There are, undoubtedly, many children whose needs can only be served in a special type of institution.

A relatively new type of child care facility in this Province is the group home, which houses a much smaller number of children than the traditional institution, in an atmosphere as much as possible like an average family setting. These are particularly useful for family groups who are not easily placed as a group in adoptive or foster homes. They also serve as a worthwhile training ground between institutional life and the outside world for children who have spent a considerable time in an institution. The third category for whom group homes are of special value are the emotionally disturbed or border line delinquent adolescents, who are receiving professional care in group homes both in Calgary and Edmonton.

The group home program is being expanded and this is a trend which your Committee hopefully expects to continue because of the unique services provided.

An older type of child care institution is the larger open institution. In the past the Department has placed wards with no special behaviour problems in these homes on a long term basis, but in our view insofar as normal children are concerned the current Departmental policy of using these institutions only when absolutely necessary for temporary care is quite correct.

Institutional care is required and will continue to be required, with increased facilities, in the closed type of institution, where for reasons of emotional disturbance or delinquency, curbs must be placed on the children during their treatment and training.

The Committee was asked specifically to examine into foster institutions as compared to foster and adoptive homes, to determine their relative impact on the lives of the children involved. We are satisfied that the manner in which the Department uses foster institutions is sound and that the environment and training provided to meet special needs is better for children with such needs than placement in adoptive or foster homes.



## F. OTHER FACTORS PERTINENT TO ADOPTION

Under the final paragraph of the terms of reference the Committee is asked to examine into any other factors pertinent to the interest of children available for adoption.

This brings into primary consideration preventive services that may tend to reduce the number of children coming into care.

### I.—HOMEMAKER SERVICES

High on the list of preventive services must be the “homemaker service” which in this province has been functioning principally in the cities of Edmonton and Calgary. The experience in this province is not unique. Across the country this day-care service is provided in the major cities, but rarely in smaller communities.

Members of your Committee have visited homemakers performing their duties as housekeepers and temporary “mothers” in surroundings that would discourage all but the most dedicated, and holding homes together in circumstances where the children would otherwise have to be taken into care at least on a temporary basis, and, without the availability of such services, probably on a permanent basis. The benefit of course, is two-fold. The number of potential adoptable children is held down, and, what is even more important, the family unit is preserved.

From rather extensive discussion at the hearings before the Committee, it is apparent that a homemaker must be carefully selected and as was observed she must be “a mature person, a responsible person, a person who understands people, has a genuine interest in children, a person who has strength both physical and emotional”. In every case the homemakers are women who have brought up families of their own. The Committee was advised that there is no dearth of such persons available but that the principal obstacle is a lack of funds in the agencies operating these services.

The original intent of the agencies with homemaker services was that they should be available to the entire community but because of the very great demand, which in 1964 was such that the Calgary Family Service Bureau was able to fill “only one out of five very eligible requests”, it has been necessary to confine the services mostly to large families, lower income families, and families on public assistance, at times when the mother is ill or has been deserted and must seek employment, or during other emergencies.



The agencies providing these services must be commended for following this policy of priorities even though it places a heavy strain on their funds, which are derived largely from United Fund or other community sources.

Agencies providing or supporting homemaker services were of the opinion that a homemaker service in the Department would be a distinct social work asset, the need being such that a Provincial service would not compete with or in any way encroach on the work of private agencies. In any event we would heartily subscribe to an extension of the homemaker service either in the Department or with the active co-operation of the Department.

The Department, through its regional offices, could perform a particularly useful service by offering short courses of instruction to assist smaller communities in setting up homemaker programs.

Whatever role the Department assumes, we believe that the services now provided by private agencies merit subsidies in order that they may be expanded. We do not believe that the Province should assume the entire cost of operation of such services.

## **II.—DAY-CARE FACILITIES**

With ever increasing numbers of mothers in the country's working force, the provision and extension of day-care facilities is of considerable importance. Such facilities would ensure adequate care for children who might otherwise come into care as neglected children. Proper day-care arrangements for children would also mean that if, as expected, the number of adoptable children increases, the Department could increase placements with working mothers without as much concern as there might otherwise be.

To a large extent the day-care program in this province has been a matter of individual arrangement between a mother and a woman who looks after one or more children in her home without official sanction of any kind. There is, of course, now a requirement of a licence for any home or nursery providing care for four or more children under eighteen years, unless there is an exemption by the Minister of Public Welfare. Although some provinces require a licence even for one child given care by day, the province should be cautious about any licence requirements limiting the acquisition of many good homes that are not able to meet certain formal requirements. The requirements for homes for individual day care should not differ substantially from the requirements for foster homes,



and probably the greatest service the Department and private agencies could render would be to have an active "finding" program similar to the foster home finding program.

In the group home type of day-care the requirement of a licence to ensure compliance with certain formal standards is important. As in the case of group homes for teen-agers, it would be regrettable if too stringent building regulations should eliminate older homes that could meet a vital need, although undoubtedly such homes could not as readily be converted into homes for care of younger children. It is unlikely that any older building would have to be considered. Ideally group day-care centres should be located in areas where the child population is highest, usually the newer areas in the larger communities.

It is difficult to do more than recommend further study as to the respective roles of government and private interests in the construction and operation of day-care centres, but it is clear that present facilities in Alberta are inadequate and that this is a preventive social service that needs to be expanded.

### III.—FAMILY COUNSELLING

Increasingly, government bodies and private agencies are recognizing the importance of family counselling as a means of averting the breakdown of the family unit. This is an area in which private agencies affiliated with religious denominations can perhaps make their greatest contribution in the way of preventive services. In many and perhaps most denominations persons with marital and family difficulties are urged to consult with clergy as a first salutary step. Many churches have not only established pastoral counselling services on a formal basis, but have recognized the need for professional social counsellors in their affiliated agencies. Community agencies have been no less alert to the value of counselling as a front line preventive service and have engaged professionally trained staff.

The Department has encouraged the counselling work of private agencies and feels that this is a preventive service that can be served better by private agencies than by government. We would agree with this view.

### IV.—STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

The Alberta Association of Social Workers stressed at the hearings as possibly their most important submission the need for qualified



professional staff, particularly in the appraisal of adoptive homes and the placement of children. Reference has been made in this report to the unfortunate delegation of child apprehension duties in many communities to persons who have neither the time nor the qualifications to do such work.

While we do not think the lack of qualification is nearly as marked in adoption work, it would seem that there are some regional offices serving large districts where the workers best qualified for adoption work are not able to use their skills throughout the district because the district is divided geographically and one worker handles all welfare matters in his zone. The Department was questioned as to the advisability of assigning a particularly skilled adoption worker to all the adoption duties in the entire area served by the regional office, and an official pointed out some difficulties with such an arrangement. It would involve problems of distance and time because of the wide area to be covered and additional costs because of some duplication of territory. The major problem would probably be the lack of continuity. If an adoption "specialist" should leave the Department there might be a void until another qualified person could be found. In particular, the Department contended that in the field of social welfare there should not be emphasis on qualifications for adoption work to the exclusion of other welfare functions, because, as one member of the Commission put it, "the neglected public assistance case of today is probably the ward of tomorrow".

The Committee must subscribe to the Department's goal of overall qualifications, but, being particularly concerned with adoptions, we would urge that in regional offices where welfare workers are young and not well qualified by formal training, special emphasis should be given to continuing in-training programs.

This concludes the report of your Committee. Mrs. Bowker has filed a supplementary report which is her own study and has not been contributed to by the other members.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

DATED this 15th day of July, A.D. 1965.

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His Honour Judge H. S. PATTERSON, Chairman

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F. J. FLEMING

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Mrs. W. F. BOWKER





Approved and Ordered,  
J. PERCY PAGE,  
Lieutenant Governor.

Edmonton, Tuesday, November 17th, 1964.

The Executive Council has had under consideration the report of the Honourable the Minister of Public Welfare, date November 13th, 1964, stating that:

WHEREAS section 8 of THE CHILD WELFARE ACT, being chapter 39 of the Revised Statutes of Alberta, 1955, provides:

"8. (1) The Minister may, with the approval of the Lieutenant Governor in Council, appoint from time to time such other committees as may be deemed desirable, for the purpose of making a thorough investigation into problems dealing with child welfare and of making recommendations for remedial changes.

(2) A Committee appointed under this section shall consist of not more than three persons, one of whom shall be designated as chairman.";

and

WHEREAS it is deemed expedient and in the public interest to cause an inquiry to be held to study child adoption services in the Province of Alberta and other matters related thereto:

THEREFORE, upon the recommendation of the Honourable the Minister of Public Welfare, the Executive Council advises that HIS HONOUR JUDGE HENRY S. PATTERSON, a Judge of the District Court of the District of Southern Alberta, as Chairman, and FRANK J. FLEMING, Barrister, of the City of Calgary, in the said Province, and Mrs. W. F. BOWKER, of the City of Edmonton, in the said Province, as Members, be and they are hereby appointed a Committee.

- (1) to inquire into and report on the present adoption legislation, procedures and practices in the Province of Alberta.
- (2) to ascertain how effectively present legislation and procedures are meeting the needs of adoptable children in the Province of Alberta.
- (3) to report on the number of children available for adoption in relation to the number of adoptions and indicate the future trends that may be expected.



- (4) to ascertain and report on the obstacles to adoption in the Province of Alberta and how these obstacles may best be removed.
- (5) to examine into the conditions and environment provided by foster institutions as compared to foster and adoptive homes to determine their relative impact on the lives of the children involved.
- (6) to examine into any other factors pertinent to the interests of children available for adoption and to make such recommendations as the Committee deems advisable, having regard to the aims and objectives of this inquiry.

Chairman.



# **NOTICE**

## **THE PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE ON ADOPTIONS**

Appointed by Order-in-Council No. 1871/64,  
dated November 17, 1964

## **INVITES SUBMISSIONS**

from any interested person or group

### **RELATING TO THE LAW AND PROCEDURE OF ADOPTIONS IN ALBERTA**

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Briefs, especially from private citizens, need not be typewritten or professionally prepared. Where possible, they should be typewritten in triplicate.

**All Briefs should be forwarded to  
His Honour Judge H. S. PATTERSON**

**Court House  
CALGARY, ALBERTA**

**before the 15th day of February, 1965**

★ ★ ★

The Committee will hold

## **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**At EDMONTON**

**commencing the 1st day of March, 1965  
and**

**At CALGARY**

**commencing the 8th day of March, 1965**

(If further hearings are warranted, they will be held at the following centres on dates to be announced: Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, Grande Prairie, Vermilion).

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**All persons presenting Briefs are invited to attend and  
speak in support of their submissions**

**Hearings will be kept as informal as possible.**

**DATED at Calgary, Alberta, this 17th day of December, 1964.**

**Chairman:**

**His Honour Judge H. S. Patterson**

**Frank J. Fleming**  
Barrister  
800 Lancaster Bldg.  
Calgary, Alberta

**Court House  
CALGARY, ALBERTA**

**Mrs. W. F. Bowker**  
10925 - 85 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta



PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE ON ADOPTIONS

QUESTIONNAIRE

The Provincial Government has appointed a Committee to look into adoption laws and procedure in Alberta with a view to making improvements where needed.

In order to get a better understanding of the problems, the Committee is circulating this Questionnaire to all persons who have adopted a child in the past two years.

It would be very helpful to the Committee if you would complete this Questionnaire, and return it as soon as possible in the stamped envelope provided.

You need not sign your name unless you choose to do so, and in any event your name will be kept confidential by the Committee.

1. How did you become interested in adopting a child?

(a) on advice of your doctor - - - .....

clergyman - - - .....

Family counsellor - - - .....

(b) from remarks of friends - - - .....

(c) from newspaper or television ads of  
the Welfare Department - - - .....

(d) other influences (specify) - - - .....

(e) no outside influence - - - .....

(Mark "X"  
Beside One Or More  
Of These)
2. To what Regional Office did you apply? .....

Did you make your first inquiry

(a) by phone - - - .....

(b) by letter - - - .....

(c) in person - - - .....

(Mark With An "X")
3. When you had your first office interview

(a) Were both husband and wife present? Yes ..... No .....

(b) Was the interview room suitable for a  
confidential discussion? - - - Yes ..... No .....  
If not, explain why .....

(c) Did you receive at this time what you consider  
to be  
good - - - .....  
fair - - - .....  
poor - - - .....  
understanding of how your adoption application would be handled?

(Mark "X" Beside The  
Right Word)



(d) After this interview, how did you feel about carrying on with your application?  
Enthusiastic - - - - - .....  
Uncertain - - - - - ..... (Mark "X" Beside The  
Not too interested - - - - - ..... Right Word)

(e) Have you any other comments about this first interview, as to whether you were pleased or not .....  
.....  
.....

4. When you filled out your application, did you ask for a specific type of child?  
Sex ..... Age .....  
Race ..... Physical characteristics .....  
(White, metis or other) ..... Nationality .....

5. After you sent in your application and documents (marriage and health certificates) how long did you wait before hearing again from the Regional office? .....  
Did you feel this length of time was  
(a) reasonable - - - - - ..... (Mark With An "X")  
(b) too long - - - - - .....

6. How long after you sent in your completed application was the first home study visit made? .....  
How did you feel about the questions you were asked? .....  
.....  
What type of questions, if any, did you feel were unnecessary? .....  
.....  
.....

Do you consider that the home study was  
(a) well conducted - - - - - ..... (Mark "X" Beside The  
(b) fair - - - - - ..... Right Word)  
(c) poorly conducted - - - - - .....

Did the home study help you understand better what is involved in adoption?  
Very helpful - - - - - ..... (Mark An "X" Beside  
Fair - - - - - ..... The Right Word)  
No Value - - - - - .....

Have you any suggestions for improving the home study?.....  
.....  
.....

Following the home study, how long did you wait until you were told that your application was accepted? .....  
In your opinion, would you say your caseworkers were  
(a) efficient and helpful - - - - - ..... (Mark An "X" Beside  
(b) only fair - - - - - ..... The Right Words)  
(c) not efficient and helpful - - - - - .....

7. After your home was approved for the adoption, how long did you wait before being told that a child was available? .....  
Did you consider this to be a reasonable delay? .....  
Where did you go to see this child? .....



Do you feel you got all the help and advice you needed at the time your child was first placed in your home? Yes ..... No .....  
If not, what more help did you need? .....

What was the SEX ..... AGE ..... RACE .....  
 (boy or girl) (White, Metis or other)  
 of the child you adopted?

8. When the child was in your home during the one-year supervisory period, how many calls did you receive from the caseworker? .....
- Were these calls (a) helpful to you? Yes ..... No .....
- (b) frequent enough? Yes ..... No .....
- During that year, did you get help and advice from the department when needed? Yes ..... No .....

If not, what more did you need? .....

After the year was up, how long did it take until you got your final order of adoption? .....

9. Looking back over your entire adoption experience, what pleased you most in the way the adoption was handled? .....

In what respects, if any, were you displeased? .....

10. Is this your first adoption? .....

11. Do you hope to adopt another child or children? .....

12. Do you feel your home could have given your adopted child proper care if the mother had been working

- (a) full time - - - - - ..... (Mark With An "X")  
(b) part time - - - - - .....

13. Your religion is
- |                |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |       |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|-------|
| (a) Protestant | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ..... |
| (b) Catholic   | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ..... |
| (c) Jewish     | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | ..... |
- (Mark With An "X")

14. Your national origins are .....

(father)

(mother)

(Your name and address if you care to give it)

**For your information, the members of the ADOPTION COMMITTEE are:**

His Honour Judge H. S. Patterson, Court House, Calgary.  
(Chairman).

Mr. Frank J. Fleming, 800 Lancaster Building, Calgary.

Mrs. W. F. Bowker, 10925 - 85 Avenue, Edmonton.



The following information is based on 1,547 replies, but the total is not necessarily 1,547 in each question. For example, in question 7, because of multiple placements, 1,693 is the total placed.

PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE ON ADOPTIONS

QUESTIONNAIRE

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In order to get a better understanding of the problems the Committee is circulating this Questionnaire to all persons who have adopted a child in the past two years.

It would be very helpful to the Committee if you would complete this Questionnaire, and return it as soon as possible in the stamped envelope provided.

You need not sign your name unless you choose to do so, and in any event your name will be kept confidential by the Committee.

1. How did you become interested in adopting a child?

(a) on advice of your doctor .....250

clergyman .....59

Family counsellor .....64

(b) from remarks of friends .....163

(c) from newspaper or television ads of the Welfare  
Department .....92

(d) other influences (specify) .....548

(e) no outside influence .....103
2. To what Regional Office did you apply? .....Attached
- Did you make your first inquiry
- (a) by phone .....732

(b) by letter .....197

(c) in person .....618
3. When you had your first office interview
- (a) Were both husband and wife present? Yes 1,422No 125

(b) Was the interview room suitable for a confidential  
discussion? .....Yes 1,425No 122

If not, explain why **Lack of privacy—uncomfortable surroundings—too close contact with Public Assistance Departments.**



(c) Did you receive at this time what you consider to be		
good .....	1,379	poor ..... 23
fair .....	116	No Comment ..... 29
understanding of how your adoption application would be handled?		

(d) After this interview, how did you feel about carrying on with your application?	
Enthusiastic .....	1,419
Uncertain .....	80
Not too interested .....	9
No Comment .....	39

(e) Have you any other comments about this first interview, as to whether you were pleased or not

**1,292 replies indicated complete satisfaction with all procedures, 225 replies indicated dissatisfaction.**

4. When you filled out your application, did you ask for a specific type of child?

Sex:	
Male .....	813
Female .....	615
Not Specified .....	131
Race (White, Metis or Other)	
White .....	1,371
Metis .....	53
Other .....	39
Not Specified .....	103
Other specification—Handicapped .....	7
Age From 1 Week to Approx. 8 Years	
Physical characteristics .....	N/A
Nationality .....	N/A

5. After you sent in your application and documents (marriage and health certificates) how long did you wait before hearing again from the Regional office?

**From 1 Week to 24 Months**

Did you feel this length of time was	
(a) reasonable .....	1,181
(b) too long .....	366



6. How long after you sent in your completed application was the first home study visit made? **From 1 Week to 18 Months.**

How did you feel about the questions you were asked?

Satisfactory .....	1,392
Unsatisfactory .....	155

What type of questions, if any, did you feel were unnecessary? **In general those questions pertaining to relatives, sterility, financial standing, and educational standards.**

Do you consider that the home study was	
(a) well conducted .....	1,395
(b) fair .....	127
(c) poorly conducted .....	25

Did the home study help you understand better what is involved in adoption?

Very helpful .....	1,444
Fair .....	85
No Value .....	18

Have you any suggestions for improving the home study? **On the whole replies indicate satisfaction with the home study, but the occasional comment suggests a more mature, and preferably married, social worker to conduct this phase of the adoption procedure.** Following the home study, how long did you wait until you were told that your application was accepted? **From 1 week to 24 months.**

In your opinion, would you say your caseworkers were	
(a) efficient and helpful .....	1,407
(b) only fair .....	115
(c) not efficient and helpful .....	25

7. After your home was approved for the adoption, how long did you wait before being told that a child was available? **From 1 week to 22 months.**

Did you consider this to be a reasonable delay?	
Yes ..... 1,342      No ..... 205	

Where did you go to see this child? **Most children were first seen in Calgary or Edmonton.**



Do you feel you got all the help and advice you needed at the time your child was first placed in your home?	
Yes .....	1,342
No .....	133
No Comment .....	72

If not, what more help did you need? **The general comment here concerns the lack of information with regard to the child's medical background, feeding habits, formulas, etc.**

What was the Sex (boy or girl):	
Male .....	966
Female .....	727
Age: from 1 week to 8 years.	
Race (White, Metis or Other):	
White .....	1,576
Metis .....	74
Other .....	43
of the child you adopted?	

8. When the child was in your home during the one-year supervisory period, how many calls did you receive from the caseworker? **4,320 (average 3 calls per placement)**

Were these calls		
(a) helpful to you? .....	Yes 1,341	No 206
(b) frequent enough? .....	Yes 1,491	No 56
During that year, did you get help and advice from the department when needed? .....	Yes 1,502	No 45
If not, what more did you need? <b>More advice concerning background of child.</b>		

After the year was up, how long did it take until you got your final order of adoption? **From 1 week to 21 months (only 818 adoptions had been completed with 729 still to complete probationary period).**

9. Looking back over your entire adoption experience, what pleased you most in the way the adoption was handled?

Speed .....	253
Welfare Workers .....	729
Matching .....	253
All procedures .....	198
No comment .....	114



In what respects, if any, were you displeased? **Delays, 492; Welfare Workers, 13; 672 for various reasons, medical, formulas, foster homes, etc.; attached breakdown outlines the most repetitive of these complaints. No comment, 340.**

10.	Is this your first adoption?			
	Yes .....	989	No .....	558
11.	Do you hope to adopt another child or children?			
	Yes .....			807
	No .....			478
	Undecided .....			262
12.	Do you feel your home would have given your adopted child proper care if the mother had been working			
	(a) full time? .....	No 1,468;	Perhaps 54;	Yes 25
	(b) part time? .....	No 1,295;	Perhaps 82;	Yes 170
13.	Your religion is			
	(a) Protestant .....			1,283
	(b) Catholic .....			262
	(c) Jewish .....			2
	Signed .....			1,383
	Unsigned .....			164

**For your information, the members of the ADOPTION COMMITTEE are:**

- His Honour Judge H. S. Patterson, Court House, Calgary. (Chairman).
- Mr. Frank J. Fleming, 800 Lancaster Building, Calgary.
- Mrs. W. F. Bowker, 10925 - 85 Avenue, Edmonton.

**APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED THROUGH REGIONAL OFFICES**

Athabasca .....	3	Medicine Hat .....	57
Barrhead .....	7	Olds .....	12
Bonnyville .....	1	Peace River .....	17
Calgary .....	479	Pincher Creek .....	11
Camrose .....	34	Red Deer .....	73
Drumheller .....	18	Smoky Lake .....	Nil
Edmonton .....	547	Stettler .....	13
Edson .....	7	St. Paul .....	4
Grande Prairie .....	47	Vegreville .....	15
Hanna .....	14	Vermilion .....	18
High Prairie .....	7	Wainwright .....	10
Lac La Biche .....	6	Wetaskiwin .....	29
Lethbridge .....	86	TOTAL .....	1515

Some of the parents replying did not indicate the Regional Office to which application was made.



## PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE ON ADOPTIONS

To:

Supervisors of all Regional Offices.

As you are no doubt aware, the provincial Government has set up a Committee to study the law and procedure relating to adoptions in Alberta. Though primarily centered upon Adoptions, the Committee's terms of reference are broad enough to cover the general field of child welfare.

Because of time and distance involved, our Committee will probably be able to visit only a few of the Regional Offices in the Province. For this reason, we are circulating this Questionnaire so as to gain a better knowledge of the situation in the various regions.

We have discussed the matter with Mr. Rogers, Deputy Minister of Public Welfare and he has agreed that all replies will be treated in strictest confidence by the three Committee members, and after serving their purpose, the questionnaires will be destroyed. This will permit the utmost frankness in giving your replies.

When completed, this form should be mailed to:-

His Honour Judge H. S. Patterson,  
Chairman, Provincial Adoptions Committee,  
Court House, Calgary.

The other members of the Adoptions Committee are:

Mr. Frank J. Fleming,  
800 Lancaster Building, Calgary, Alberta.  
Mrs. W. F. Bowker,  
10925 - 85th Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta.

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### (1) Office Facilities

We realize that it is impossible to provide "ideal" office facilities. Bearing this in mind, would you say that the physical facilities of your office are adequate?

If not, are there any features that seriously affect the efficiency of your work?

Is there anything that might be done immediately at modest cost to substantially improve your office facilities, and thereby improve the services you are able to give?



(2) Staff

We realize that we may never achieve the “ideal” so far as numbers of staff and their training and experience. Bearing this in mind, do you have any really serious problems with regard to:-

- (a) Numbers of staff—
- (b) The quality of their training or experience?

Is the work of your office being seriously jeopardized by these factors?

Are there any members of your staff who are interested in a career with the Welfare Department and who would be interested in educational leave grants to further their education in the field of welfare, if such grants were available? Kindly specify persons on your staff who might be so interested, their age, sex, present academic background, and their particular field of interest in the welfare field?

Name	Age	Sex	Academic Background	Particular Field of Interest

Note: “Academic Background” should show either: High School (University entrance)—or University Degree.

How many members of your present staff have attended the 3-week “In Service Training” at Central Office?

Name	Approximate Month and Year

How beneficial has this training been?



How many of your present staff have attended Seminars, or any other training, offered by the Department, or elsewhere?

Name	Month & Year	Type of Training	Where	How Long

Are there any improvements you can suggest in staff training?

**(3) Central Office**

Are you satisfied with your relations with Central Office? If not, can you suggest how they might be improved?

How often in the past two years, has someone from Central Office visited your office?

Approximate Month and Year	Person from Central Office	Purpose of Visit and What was Accomplished



#### **(4) Adoptions**

Approximately how many adoption applications did your office handle in:- 1963 ..... 1964 ..... ?

Have you noticed any decline in the past two years in the number of persons applying to adopt?

If so, when was this first evident?

Have you any suggestions as to the possible cause?

Are you able to accommodate and reach out to prospective adoptive parents as much as you would like to in your area?

How many Home Studies are underway in your office at the present time?

Who conducts the initial interview at your office with persons inquiring to adopt? (specify by age, training, experience).

Would experienced and trained part time workers be effective in intake?

Can you judge as to the effectiveness in your area of the Department's newspapers and TV ads promoting adoptions?

Could you suggest any project that would be helpful.

Does it create any problem in your office because adoption applicants must share the same waiting room with persons applying for social assistance?

Could your office be re-arranged in any way to overcome this problem, if it exists?

Would a travelling team of adoption workers—that is experienced group worker and case worker meet a need in this area?

#### **(5) Foster Homes**

How many children are in Foster Homes in your district at the present time?

Temporary Wards ..... Permanent Wards .....

Do you have enough good Foster Homes?

Catholic ..... Protestant .....

Could you see good day care facilities as a practical supplement to The Foster Home Program?

Approximately how many of your Foster Homes would be farm homes?

If you have Foster Homes on farms and in town, how would you compare them as suitable places for foster children?

Are there any possibilities in your area for permanent Foster Home placements for the more-difficult-to-place child (such as older children, handicapped children or Metis)?



## **(6) Services To Unmarried Parents**

Approximately how many inquiries do you have in any one year from unmarried mothers?

Of these, how many are interested only in financial help?

How many seek and accept counselling?

Do you feel the Department is meeting a need in this area (apart from financial aid)?

Do you feel counselling services should be extended to putative fathers?

## **(7) Marriage Counselling**

Do you see any need in your district for offering these services:

(a) to those contemplating marriage?

(b) to those with marriage problems?

Could these needs be met by travelling staff members who would spend a day or two, every week or two, at different Regional Offices?

## **(8) Special Problems**

What would you say are the special problems facing your particular area in regard to welfare matters?

Have you any really serious problem that requires a special visit from our Committee?

How would you say the public views the work of the Welfare Department? In other words, what is its "public image" in your district?

Are the services of the Welfare Department (apart from public assistance) appreciated in your community?

Do the members of your staff enjoy the respect they deserve in your community because of the kind of work they are doing?

Do you see homemakers services a help in preventing family breakdowns (e.g. mother leaves or is hospitalized, etc.)?

Do you feel that the child Welfare Protection Services provided by the municipality is effective enough—if not why not?

Have you any other comments which may be helpful to the Committee?

.....  
Name of Regional Office

.....  
Supervisor



Date Due

<del>JUL 5 1976</del>			
<del>DEC 2 1991</del>			
<del>OCT 26/71</del> APR - 6 2001			
<del>DEC 20 78</del>			
<del>JUL 7 1980</del>			
<del>NOV 5 1980</del>			
<del>NOV 25 1980</del>			
<del>DEC 10 1980</del>			
<del>SEP 24 1981</del>			
FEB 14 1995			



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